R. Fergusson

Engraved by R. Bell after the original bequeathed by the Poet to W. Ruddiman

THE WORKS

OF

ROBERT FERGUSSON

Tomb of Fergusson Canongate Churchyard Edinburgh

Adam Black & C. London & Edinburgh.

THE

WORKS

OF

ROBERT FERGUSSON.

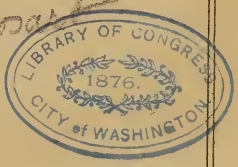
EDITED,

WITH LIFE OF THE AUTHOR

AND AN

ESSAY ON HIS GENIUS AND WRITINGS,

BY A. B. G.



LONDON, EDINBURGH, AND DUBLIN:
A. FULLARTON AND CO.

1851.

PR3448
.F3
1851

EDINBURGH:
FULLARTON AND MACNAB, PRINTERS, LEITH WALK.

TO

JOHN FORBES, ESQ.,

WRITER, OLDMELDRUM,

AND

JAMES INVERARITY,

LONDON,

COUSINS OF THE POET,

THIS EDITION OF HIS POEMS

IS DEDICATED WITH RESPECT

BY THE

EDITOR.

PREFACE.

In presenting a new edition of the Poems of Fergusson, the Editor may be allowed to state in what respects it may be considered superior to any that has preceded it.

(1) In preparing the Life of the author he has left no source unexplored: and any reader at all acquainted with preceding biographies will at once perceive that his success has not been small. Let it be remembered that half a century ago, Dr. Irving (assisted by Dr. Anderson), "with all his endeavours" was only able to procure the very meagre details which compose his Life of the Poet. The present Memoir is enriched with various interesting Letters and other (hitherto) unpublished MSS.

(2) The Poems are now for the first time fully collected and chronologically arranged. The text, which has been grievously corrupted in all existing editions, is formed from the author's own volume of 1772-3, so far as it extends, with various readings from the different poems as they were originally published in the "Weekly Magazine or Edinburgh Amusement."

The volume of 1772-3, however, only contained nine Scottish poems. For the other and more numerous pieces, while he adheres strictly to the text of the 'Weekly Magazine or Edinburgh Amusement,' the Editor has, by a careful collation, supplied many interesting

various readings from the early editions [1779 and 1782]. It might appear invidious to point out the errors in matter and variations in orthography, which appear in even the more ambitious reprints of the Poems. The Editor requests those who are interested in such matters, to compare the present with the text of Morison and Son, Perth, 1789; of Chapman and Lang, Glasgow, 1801; of Deas, Edinburgh, 1805; of Peterkin, London, 1807; of the Rev. James Gray, Edinburgh, 1821,—the only editions at all pretending to accuracy.

(3) The Notes and other peculiar features may be allowed to recommend themselves. It is hoped that the Portrait and other Illustrations will prove acceptable.

It only remains with the Editor to return to many kind friends his very grateful thanks and acknowledgments for the interest which they have manifested in his "labour of love:" and he proceeds to specify names, not ostentatiously as may at first appear, but in certitude of every little particular in the Life and Notes. To John Forbes, Esq., of Old Meldrum, and James Inverarity, Esq., London, cousins of the poet, he is indebted for all the family papers, mentioned and cited, in whole or in part, in the Life. He entertains a high sense of the confidence and courtesy of these worthy representatives of Fergusson.

To his late venerated friend, Miss Ruddiman, only daughter of Mr. Walter Ruddiman, the senior publisher of the Magazine, in which nearly all the poems of this volume originally appeared, he owes the sincerest gratitude: and equally so to the present Misses Ruddiman of this city. To those ladies he is indebted for the various Ruddiman MSS. with which the Memoir is enriched. He

need only particularly specify the three MS. Sketches of the Life of Fergusson by Mr. Thomas Ruddiman. Miss Ruddiman died on the 13th of April, 1849, when she had nearly completed her ninetieth year.

To Leonard Schmitz, Esq., the present accomplished Rector of the High School of Edinburgh, the Editor is obliged for interesting memorabilia concerning the poet's attendance at that academy. To Christopher Kerr, Esq., Writer, Dundee, in like manner, he returns his best thanks for the invaluable documents concerning Fergusson's attendance at the Grammar School of Dundee and St. Andrews University.

To J. A. Campbell, Esq., Sheriff Clerk, and Hutton Wilson, Esq., Deputy Clerk, he is indebted for researches into the Records of the Sheriff and Commissary Clerks' Offices, for the period during which Fergusson was employed in those situations: and to James Wilson, Esq., and Alexander Goodsir, Esq., of the British Linen Co., for similar researches in respect of Fergusson, senior.

The Life and Notes will show how much the Editor is obligated to the venerable Principal Lee of the University of Edinburgh, and to one who is not more able than willing to assist, David Laing, Esq., Keeper of the Writers to the Signet Library.

His best acknowledgments are likewise due to Captain James Hay of North Belton; to James Fergusson, Esq., of Balledmund; to James Samuel, Esq., of Broomhouse; to Mr. John Robertson of Moulin; to Peter Cunningham, Esq., of Somerset House; to Joseph Robertson, Esq., of the Courant, Edinburgh; to Charles Mackay, Esq., LL.D. late of Glasgow, now of London; to W. F. Mayne, Esq., and S. C. Hall, Esq., of the same city; to Robert Cham-

bers, Esq.; to Daniel Wilson, Esq., Acting Secretary of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland; W. F. Watson, Esq., all of Edinburgh; to Robert Carruthers, Esq., of Inverness; to David Chalmers, Esq., of Aberdeen; to John Buddo, Esq., Writer, and John Buist, Esq., Banker, St. Andrews; to Professors Gregory and Innes, and Blair Wilson, Esq., of Edinburgh University; to Dr. Taylor of Archibald Place; Alexander S. Logan, Esq., Advocate; John Shand, Esq., W.S.; and Charles Kirkwood, Esq., Accountant, all of Edinburgh.

The volume will show too, how much the Editor is indebted to the late lamented Professor Tennant of St. Andrews; to the late Alexander Peterkin, Esq., S.S.C.; to the late respected Simon Sawers, Esq., of Dunbar; to the late W. S. Briggs, Esq., Her Majesty's Accountant to the Navy; and to the late James M'Cosh, Esq., of Dundee.

The Editor must offer his thanks to the Press of Edinburgh, Glasgow, Aberdeen, Dublin, London, New York, and Boston, for the ready insertion which they gave to his various inquiries.

To America's favourite poets, W. C. Bryant, Esq., and Professor W. H. Longfellow, he would waft his special gratitude for the manner in which they promoted his researches in respect more especially of the brother of the poet.

With reference to Dr. Irving, the Editor must duly acknowledge his uniform courtesy and interest. He has not spoken, as otherwise he should have done, of his Life [or Lives] of Fergusson, because it has long since slumbered innocuously in adust shelves: a circumstance that must in one respect be somewhat consola-

tory to the writer, seeing that having been brought out in his earlier life, they contain details precipitate and errant.

Finally, in the preparation of the Notes and the completed Glossary, the Editor is anxious to express his obligations to his friends, Mr. Robert Burns, secundus, of Dumfries; and Mr. Peter Mitchell of Bentend, near Falkirk.

The Volume now presented to the public (with other similar Doric researches), has occupied the leisure hours of several years, during more weighty and serious studies, —and it is now sent forth in the modest hope that it may be found to possess the quality of being in some degree a conclusive edition, not unworthy of the memory of the poet, and of the long established popularity of the poems.

A. B. G.

Edinburgh, 1851.

N. B.—The reader may ask why the Work is issued anonymously? The Editor replies in the words of good Dr. Cotton.

"Authors, you know, of greatest fame,
Thro' modesty suppress their name;
And would you wish *me* to reveal
What these superior wits conceal?
Forego the search, my curious friend,
And husband time to better end;
All my ambition is, I own,
To profit and to please unknown,
Like streams supplied from springs below
Which scatter blessings as they flow."

PORTRAITS OF FERGUSSON.

I. In the 'Codicil to his poetical will,' Fergusson thus refers to a portrait of himself:

> "To Walter Ruddiman, whose pen
> Still screen'd me from the dunce's den,
> I leave of phiz a picture, saving
> To him the freedom of engraving
> Therefrom a copy, to embellish,
> And give his work a smarter relish," &c.

This 'picture,' which is supposed to have been by Runciman, was duly delivered over to Mr. Ruddiman; and I am indebted to Mr Laing, keeper of the Signet Library, for the following particulars:—

Mr. Ruddiman had intrusted the portrait to Mr. James Cummyng; and while the second edition of the poems was in the press, 1782, he addressed this card to Mr. Cummyng.—"Tho. Ruddiman's compliments to Mr. Cummyng, begs he would look among his papers for a quarto book of drawings which T. R. left with Mr C. some months ago. It contains a sketch of the likeness of R. Fergusson, whose works T. R. has nearly ready for publication, and wishes to have his head engraved with all speed. If Mr. C. will leave the book with his son, T. R. will send for it this afternoon.

"*Tuesday, 7th May*, 1782."

In a postscript to another letter to Mr. Cummyng, Mr. Ruddiman says, "The want of Fergusson's head is an infinite loss to me at present.—14*th May*, 1782."

The volume was issued without a portrait, so that Mr. Cummyng must have mislaid the drawing.

II. The portrait which is given in the present edition is carefully and faithfully re-engraved from a private copper-plate, which belonged to Mr. Walter Ruddiman, jun., and with which I was favoured by my venerable friend, the late Miss Ruddiman. An impression from this copper-plate of Mr Ruddiman was framed and hung above the parlour mantel-piece; and it was regarded by the family as a correct portrait of the poet. The editor is of opinion that the 'drawing' referred to in Mr. Ruddiman's note to Mr. Cummyng must have been subsequently recovered, and the copper-plate engraved therefrom. It is the alone authenticated portrait, and there cannot be a doubt that it faithfully—*literally* represents the poet.

III. The first portrait of Fergusson that was published was that in the edition of the first part of the poems published by Morison and Son of Perth, 1788. I have endeavoured to trace the original from which this engraving was taken, but without success, although assisted by the present Mr. Morison of Perth. The attitude and adjuncts correspond with the copper-plate of Mr Ruddiman, and I am inclined to think that Mr. Ruddiman must have forwarded an impression from his plate to the Messrs. Morison, from which they engraved theirs, *with improvements*. It is hardly necessary to state that fidelity should have been preferable. It is this portrait, as given by Morison and Son, that has been usually prefixed to

the poems. I may state that Miss Ruddiman, Professor Vilant of St. Andrews, Mr. Howden, jeweller, and Mr. Spence of Edinburgh, all recognised a likeness in the portrait of Morison and Son, and its re-engravings. Still there was a something unsatisfactory, which is easily accounted for by the *improving* alterations made.

IV. In Mr. Sommers' life of Fergusson there is the following somewhat romantic account of a portrait of him taken by Runciman.—Life, pp. 22.

"Mr. Alexander Runciman, an eminent painter, well known at that time [1772-3, ?], was painting in his own house in the Pleasance, a picture on a half-length cloth, of the prodigal son, in which his fancy and pencil had introduced every necessary object and circumstance suggested by the sacred passage. At his own desire, I called to see it. I was much pleased with the composition, colouring, and admirable effect of the piece, at least what was done of it; but expressed my surprise at observing a large space in the centre, exhibiting nothing but chalk outlines of a human figure. He informed me that he had reserved that space for the prodigal, but could not find a young man whose personal form and expressive features were such as he could approve of, and commit to the canvass. Robert Fergusson's face and figure instantly occurred to me; not from an idea that Fergusson's real character was that of the prodigal, by no means, but on account of his sprightly humour, personal appearance, and striking features. I asked Mr. Runciman if he knew the poet? He answered in the negative, but that he had often read and admired his poems. That evening at five, I appointed to meet with him and the poet, in a tavern, Parliament Close. We did so, and I introduced

him. The painter was much pleased, both with his figure and conversation. I intimated to Fergusson the nature of the business on which we met; he agreed to sit next forenoon; I accompanied him for that purpose, and in a few days, the picture strikingly exhibited the bard in the character of a prodigal, sitting on a grassy bank surrounded by swine, some of which were sleeping, and others feeding; his right leg over his left knee, eyes uplifted, hands clasped, tattered clothes, and with expressive countenance bemoaning his forlorn and miserable situation! This picture, when finished, reflected high honour on the painter, being much admired. It was sent to the Royal Exhibition in London, where it was also highly esteemed, and there purchased by a gentleman of taste and fortune, at a considerable price. I have often expressed a wish to see a print from it, but never had that pleasure, as it exhibited a portrait of my favourite bard which, for likeness, colouring, and expression, might have done honour to the taste and pencil of Sir Joshua Reynolds."

Notwithstanding very considerable research, in which I had the kind co-operation of S. C. Hall, Esq., editor of the 'Art-union Journal,' I have failed in tracing this painting. It is certainly very desirable that its present possessor should be known.

V. In the edition of the poems, published by Anderson of Edinburgh, with Life by the Rev. James Gray, 1821, there is given a hideous study from another picture of Runciman, which represents the 'Return of the Prodigal.' It is said to be, by the editor, a 'portrait of Fergusson:' but there is not a tittle of evidence adduced. It is wholly supposititious; and certainly the engraving

of it was in the worst taste. I purchased the plate from the proprietor, that no more impressions might be issued.

VI. Prefixed to Peterkin's edition of the poems, London, 1807, is a portrait of Fergusson, entirely different from the usual ones. It was taken from the sister of the poet, Mrs. Duval, who was supposed considerably to resemble her brother, and was induced thereby to sit. It is worthless as a portrait of the poet.

EDITIONS OF THE POEMS OF FERGUSSON.

☞ I give only those editions that are in my own possession. There may be, nay doubtless there are, numerous others.

I. Poems. By R. Fergusson. Walter and Thomas Ruddiman, 1773. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 132. Vignette in title-page, a figure playing on the Scots whistle,—in the distance the three graces,—in the air, 'flying 'mong clouds,' Fame blowing his trumpet,—hills,—water.

The preceding volume was passed through the press in 1772 (see Life, p. lxxxv), and was advertised as follows, in the Scots Magazine, vol. xxxiv, p. 672, December 1772: "Poems. By Robert Fergusson. 1 vol. 12mo, 1772. 2s. 6d. Drummond and Elliott."

It is to be presumed that the subscription papers were left with Drummond and Elliot. No copy has been met with, so far as I can learn, having their imprint, nor of date 1772. There were large and small paper copies of this edition; both are rare.

II. Poems on Various Subjects, by Robert Fergusson. Part ii. Edinburgh, printed by Walter and Thomas Ruddiman, 1779. 1 vol. 12mo, pp. 151. As a preface, there is given the short sketch of Fergusson's life which is usually prefixed to the poems. It was written by Mr. Thomas Ruddiman. The MS. is in my possession.

This Part ii. is sometimes found bound up with the author's own volume of 1773.

III. Poems on Various Subjects, by Robert Fergusson. In two parts. The second edition. Edinburgh, printed by T. Ruddiman, for J. Bell, J. Dickson, W. Creech, C. Elliot, P. Anderson, and J. Simpson, 1782. 1 vol. 12mo. Memoir reprinted, pp., part i., 105, part ii. 151.

The sale of this edition must have been very great. From a receipt among the Ruddiman MSS., I find that C. Elliot, who does not appear to have been anywise specially concerned, received as his supply no less than one thousand copies. If each of the booksellers, whose names appear above, obtained a like number, (and it is probable that Mr. Ruddiman would retain more for himself,) the edition must have consisted of seven thousand.

IV. Poems on Various Subjects, by Robert Fergusson. In two parts. The third edition. Edinburgh, printed by T. Ruddiman and Co., 1785. 1 vol. 12mo. Memoir reprinted, pp. 240. Seven thousand copies, if not more, had thus been exhausted in less than three years.

V. Poems on Various Subjects, by Robert Fergusson. In two parts. Part i. [English poems], 1 vol. 12mo, 1788. Part ii. [Scottish poems], 1 vol. 12mo, 1789. Perth, printed by R. Morison, Jun., for R. Morison and Son, booksellers; and sold by J. Murray, No. 32 Fleet Street, London. Memoir reprinted. Large, thick paper copies of this edition were struck off. Such are rare. The two parts are usually found in one volume. This edition contained the first published portrait of Fergusson. 'Mr. Robert Fergusson, ætatis xxiv. A Birrel, sculpsit.' Concerning this portrait, see p. xi. No. iii. It was likewise embellished [?] with two illustrations, Birrel after Collings, (1) to the Simile; (2) to the poem of Hallow Fair.

VI. Poems on Various Subjects, by Robert Fergusson. In two parts. Paisley, printed by J. Neilson, for R. Smith, 1796. 1 vol. 12mo. Memoir reprinted.

VII. The Poetical Works of R. Fergusson. Paisley, published by R. Smith, bookseller, 1799. 1 vol. 12mo. Engraved title-page, and poor copy of the Perth portrait. Memoir reprinted.

VIII. Poems on Various Subjects, by Robert Fergusson. In two parts, embellished with engravings. Edinburgh, printed by T. Ross and Sons, for W. Martin, South Bridge, 1799. 1 vol. 12mo. Memoir reprinted. Portrait and illustrations of the Perth edition poorly re-engraved. W. Martin was the famous bookselling auctioneer of facetious memory, whose grinning physiognomy has been preserved by Kay.

IX. Poems on Various Subjects, by Robert Fergusson. St. Andrews, printed by Mr. Francis Ray for Tullis, Cupar Fife, 1800. 1 vol. 12mo. There is prefixed a portrait which is stated to be "from the original drawing;" but it appears to be only a copy from that of the Perth edition. Professor Vilant confirmed the likeness to Mr. Inverarity in 1801. There is a Memoir of the poet, shortly enlarged from the preceding, signed T., who seems to have been well acquainted with Fergusson. Professor Tennant of St. Andrews, and the present Mr. Tullis of Cupar Fife, vainly endeavoured to trace the writer of the memoir, and the authority for the portrait for me.

X. Works of Robert Fergusson, with Life, by David Irving, Glasgow. Chapman and Lang. 1 vol. 12mo, 1800. This edition gives a supposititious portrait of no value. It is likewise embellished with three so-called '*elegant* engravings.'

XI. The Works of Robert Fergusson, with a short account of his life, and a concise glossary. Edinburgh, printed for W. and J. Deas, front of the Royal Exchange, 1805. 1 vol. 12mo. This life is written with great taste. The Perth portrait is prefixed, somewhat more

improved, and accordingly more and more removed from fidelity.

XII. The Poems of Robert Fergusson, to which is prefixed a short sketch of the author's life. Edinburgh, printed by Oliver and Co., Netherbow, 1806. 1 vol. 32mo. Supposititious portrait. This life is well written, and closes with a vigorous protest against the "foul calumnies" of Dr. Irving. The writer hopes "that the time shall come when justice shall be done to the deeply injured Fergusson." This is a very neat diamond type edition.

XIII. The Works of Robert Fergusson, to which is prefixed a sketch of the author's life. London, printed for S., A., and H. Oddy, 27 Oxford Street, 1807. 1 vol. 8vo. Supposititious portrait. This life is the fullest that has yet been issued. It was written by the late Alexander Peterkin, Esq., S.S.C. It was well meant, but contains a great deal of prose run mad. It is a generous, bombastic, painstaking, ridiculous production. Our epithets may appear mutually destructive; but let the reader consult the work for himself, and he shall admit their force.

XIV. The Poems of Robert Fergusson. In two parts. To which are prefixed a sketch of the author's life, and a cursory view of his writings, by James Bannington. London, printed by A. Macpherson, Russell Court, Covent Garden, 1809. 1 vol. 12mo. This life is very creditable to Mr. Bannington.

XV. The Works of Robert Fergusson, to which is prefixed a sketch of the author's life. A new edition. Greenock, printed for William Scott, 1810. 1 vol. 8vo. This is the same with No. xiii., having only a new title-page.

XVI. The Poetical Works of Robert Fergusson, with his life. Alnwick, printed by W. Davison. 2 vols. 12mo.

This edition is embellished with a great variety of engravings on wood by Bewick. It contains likewise a supposititious vignette portrait, and the following copper-plate engravings: vol. i., frontispiece, an illustration of 'A Saturday's Expedition;' vol. ii., frontispiece, an illustration of the 'Ghaists,' and vignette of Burns kneeling at the author's grave. The life is a slightly modified reprint of Peterkin's.

XVII. The Works of Robert Fergusson, with an account of his life. Glasgow, printed by W. Falconer, 3 High Street, 1821. 1 vol. 12mo. The life is that of No. ii., part ii.

XVIII. The Works of Robert Fergusson, with an account of his life. Glasgow, printed for William Bilsland, bookseller, 1821. Ibid.

XIX. The Works of Robert Fergusson, with an account of his life. Edinburgh, printed for James Robertson, Macredie, Skelly and Co., Waugh and Innes, and W. Oliphant, Edinburgh, and Ogle and Co., London, 1821. 1 vol. 12mo. Ibid.

Nos. xvii., xviii., and xix. were one edition, and these were only the title-pages of the respective supplies. This edition consisted of, I have been informed, eight thousand copies.

XX. The Poems of Robert Fergusson, with a life of the author, and remarks on his genius and writings, by James Gray, Esq., [subsequently the Rev. James Gray,] of the High School, Edinburgh, author of 'Cona,' &c. Edinburgh, printed for John Fairbairn, John Anderson, Jun., 55 North Bridge Street, Oliver and Boyd, Macredie and Co., Edinburgh, and T. Tegg, London, 1821. 1 vol. 12mo. Large and small paper. See portraits, No. v.

XXI. Poems on Various Subjects, by Robert Fergusson. Paisley, Neilson, 1825. 1 vol. 24mo.

XXII. The Poetical Works of Robert Fergusson, with

a memoir of the author, and notes illustrating local and personal allusions. Edinburgh, published by William and Robert Chambers, 1840. 8vo.

☞ There have been five Lives of Fergusson published:

I. In the Notices of Scottish Poets of Alexander Campbell, in his "Introduction to the History of Poetry in Scotland." 1 vol. 4to, 1798, pp. 288-300.

II. 'Life of Robert Fergusson,' by David Irving. 1799. Glasgow, Chapman and Lang. Tract, pp. 40. This Life passed through several editions, 1800, 1801, 1804, and is incorporated in Dr. Irving's 'Lives of the Scottish Poets.'

III. 'Life of Robert Fergusson, the Scottish Poet,' by Thomas Sommers. Edinburgh, 1803. Tract, pp. 64.

IV. Prefixed to the London octavo edition of the poems. 1 vol., 1807, and Greenock, 1810, by Alexander Peterkin, Esq., S S.C. [See No. xiii.]

V. Prefixed to Anderson's edition of the poems. 1 vol. 12mo, 1821, by the Rev. James Gray. [See No. xx.]

Besides these Lives, there are a great many short sketches. The Preface by Ruddiman to part ii. of the poems, 1779, is usually prefixed to the poems. There are likewise Notices of Fergusson in the various Biographical Dictionaries and Encyclopedias of our own country, as well as in the Conversations Lexicon of Germany, and the Biographie Universelle of France.

CONTENTS.

	Page
Dedication,	iii
Preface,	v
Account of the Portraits of Fergusson,	x
Editions of the Poems,	xv
Lives and Biographical Notices,	xx
Life of the Author,	xxv
Appendix to Life,	ci
Essay on his Genius and Poems,	cxxxi

I. POEMS IN THE SCOTTISH DIALECT.

Elegy on the Death of Mr. David Gregory,	1
The Daft Days,	3
Elegy on the Death of Scots Music,	7
The King's Birth-day in Edinburgh,	10
Caller Oysters,	16
Letter to Mr. Robert Fergusson,	19
Answer to Mr. John Scott's Epistle,	22
Braid Claith,	25
An Eclogue to the Memory of Dr. William Wilkie,	29
Hallow-fair,	33
To the Tron-Kirk Bell,	38
Caller Water,	40
Mutual Complaint of Plainstanes and Causey,	44
The Rising of the Session,	50
The Sitting of the Session,	54
Ode to the Bee,	56

Page
The Farmer's Ingle, ... 58
Song—The Lea-rig, ... 63
The Ghaists; a Kirk-Yard Eclogue, . . . 65
Letters:—
To Robert Fergusson, ... 71
To Andrew Gray, ... 73
To Robert Fergusson, ... 75
On seeing a Butterfly in the Street, . . . 77
Hame Content—A Satire, ... 80
Leith Races, ... 84
Hallowfair—"Fy let us a' to the Bridal," . . 92
Ode to the Gowdspink, ... 95
The Election, ... 98
To the Principal and Professors of the University of St. Andrews, 103
Elegy on John Hogg, ... 107
A Drink Eclogue, ... 112
An Eclogue, ... 116
Verses on visiting Dumfries, ... 120
To my auld Breeks, ... 123
Auld Reekie, ... 126
Horace, Ode xi. Lib. 1. 140
Additional Notes and Illustrations, . . 141

II. POEMS IN ENGLISH.

Songs from Artaxerxes, ... 148
Ode to Hope, ... 150
A Tale, ... 152
On being asked which of three Sisters was the most beautiful, 153
The Rivers of Scotland, ... 154
Pastorals:—
Pastoral I.—Morning, ... 161
Pastoral II.—Noon, ... 164
Pastoral III.—Night, ... 168
The Complaint, a Pastoral, ... 171
The Town and Country Contrasted, . . . 173
Ode to Pity, ... 175
Song—"Amidst a rosy bank of flowers," . . 176
On the Cold Month of April, 1771, . . . 177
A Saturday's Expedition, ... 179

Page
The Decay of Friendship, ... 184
Written at the Hermitage of Braid, ... 187
Song—"No repose can I discover," 189
A Burlesque Elegy on the Amputation of a Student's Hair, 189
Fashion, ... 191
Retirement, ... 194
Extempore, on seeing some Stanzas to Mrs. Hartley, wherein she is described as resembling Mary Queen of Scots, . 196
On the Death of Mr. Thomas Lancashire, Comedian, . 197
Song—"Where winding Forth," 198
Conscience,—an Elegy, ... 199
On the Death of Dr. Toshack of Perth, ... 200
The Simile, ... 200
To Mr. John F. Guion, Comedian, ... 201
Damon to his Friends, ... 202
The Canongate Play-house in Ruins, ... 205
The Peasant, the Hen, and Young Ducks, . . . 208
On seeing a Lady Paint herself, ... 210
Against Repining at Fortune, ... 211
Epitaph on General Wolfe, ... 212
Epigram on the numerous Epitaphs for General Wolfe, . 214
On a Premium of £100 being offered for the best Epitaph on General Wolfe, ... 214
Good Eating, ... 214
The Delights of Virtue, ... 219
Character of a Friend, in an Epitaph which he desired the author to write, ... 220
A Tavern Elegy, ... 221
The Sow of Feeling, ... 223
Epilogue spoken by Mr. Wilson, at the Theatre Royal, in the Character of an Edinburgh Buck, ... 226
The Antiquary, ... 228
The Bugs, ... 230
Tea, ... 235
An Expedition to Fife and the Isle of May, . . . 238
On the Music Bells Playing prior to Brown and Wilson's Execution, 242
To Sir John Fielding on his attempt to suppress the Beggar's Opera, 243
Epigram on seeing Scales used in a Mason Lodge, . 246
To Dr. Samuel Johnson: Food for a New Edition of his Dictionary, 246
On Johnson's Dictionary, ... 249

Page

Epigram on James Boswell, Esq., and Dr. Samuel Johnson being confined to the Isle of Sky, ... 251

Extempore by Mr. R. Fergusson, on Leith Walk, on hearing some young lawyers propose to pay a visit to the old gibbet, then just cut down, ... 251

R. Fergusson's Last Will, ... 252

Codicil to R. Fergusson's Last Will, ... 255

To the Memory of John Cunningham, ... 259

Job chap. iii., Paraphrased, ... 263

Ode to Horror, ... 264

Ode to Disappointment, ... 266

A Dirge, ... 268

The Author's Life, ... 268

Song—"Since brightest beauty soon must fade," . . 269

On the Author's intention of going to Sea, . . 269

On seeing a Collection of Pictures painted by Mr. Runciman, 269

On Night, ... 270

Epigram on Mr. Scott, ... 270

Glossary, ... 271

MEMOIR

OF

ROBERT FERGUSSON.

By Alex. B. Grosart

"I intend to write this Life with all truth, and equal plainness."

ISAAC WALTON,—*Sanderson.*

CHAPTER I.

1750—1756.

Birth—Birth-place—Parentage—Employments of Father—Letters.

ROBERT FERGUSSON, one of the "sweet-singers" of our fatherland, was born in Edinburgh on the 5th day of September 1750.[1]

1 I am enabled to state the birthday as above, *positively*, from family-sources inaccessible to previous biographers. The date given in the short notice prefixed to Part II. of the Poems 1779 (supplementary to the volume published by the Author 1772-3), is 5th September 1751 (not 1750), a misprint which was not corrected till the Life of Fergusson by Dr. Irving appeared in 1799 (Glasgow: Chapman and Lang, pp. 44). This misprint had previously been repeated in the short Memoirs prefixed to the Poems as published in 1782 and 1785 in Edinburgh, in 1788-9 in Perth, in 1796 and 1799 in Paisley.

Subsequent to 1799 it is only to be met with casually in reprints from the classic presses of Caldwell of Paisley, Johnston of Falkirk, &c. &c. It was only in 1832-5 that the correct chronology of Dr. Irving was, with intention, departed from. Mr. Chambers, in his 'Lives of eminent and distinguished Scotsmen,' in loc.: and in his 'Life of Fergusson' prefixed to a 'People's edition' of the Poems, has given 17th October 1750, as the birthday of the Poet, on the authority of Mrs. Duval, younger sister of Fergusson. The only reason assigned by Mrs. Duval for the change is

His birthplace was a small old house, much smaller than the rest, in the Cap-and-Feather close, a confined alley, memorable in Scottish story, which stood immediately above (the present) Halkerston's Wynd, but whose site is now, it is believed, (from improvements which, in these utilitarian days, only Antiquaries lament,) occupied by North Bridge Street.[1]

He was the third son of a family of (at least) five children.[2] His father was William Fergusson, who came from Tarland, Aberdeenshire.[3] His mother, Elizabeth,

the following somewhat singular one: "it (5th September) appears to have been the birthday of his elder sister Barbara." I have in my possession the list referred to by Mrs. Duval as her authority: but that list was taken from another (likewise in my possession), hastily written down, in pencil, by a Mr. Carnegie of whom nothing is known. *My* authority for 5th September 1750, as the birthday of the poet, is a Sketch of the Life of Fergusson by Mr. Thomas Ruddiman, an unpublished MS. which was presented to me by my late venerable friend, Miss Ruddiman, confirmed by another shorter Sketch likewise drawn up by Mr. Ruddiman. *His* authority was the mother of Fergusson, who pointed out the misprint of 1751 in the Notice of 1779, 1782, &c. Moreover, the elder sister, Mrs. Inverarity, who, equally with Mrs. Duval must have known her own birthday, gave 5th September 1750 to Dr. Irving, as that of her brother. It is very apparent that Mrs. Duval had confounded the death with the birthday, and I am strengthened in this supposition by finding that in the Obituary of the Weekly Magazine, his death is (erroneously) inserted under the 17th (not the 16th) of October, which corresponds with the birthday given by Mrs. Duval.

There is no entry of the birth of any of the Fergussons in the registers of the parish, which were duly examined 1746 to 1782.

1 Chambers. Mr. Wilson, in his interesting 'Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time,' vol. II. p. 22, remarks, "In Edgar's map, the close is shown extending no further than in a line with Milne's Court, so that the whole of the east side still remains, including, it may be, the poet's birthplace." Edgar's map of the City was published in 1742, immediately before the commencement of the modern improvements.

2 Previous to the removal from Aberdeen there had been born, Henry, 1742 [See Appendix A]: Barbara (afterwards the wife of Mr. David Inverarity, joiner), 1744: John (who seems to have died in infancy), 1746. After residence in Edinburgh, Robert, 1750: Margaret (afterwards the wife of Mr. Alexander Duval, purser in the navy), 1753 [See Appendix B]; and * * * (in a family-note A is written, but deleted), 1755. Inverarity MSS. and Chambers' Emin. Scots. Fergusson, in loc.

3 My authorities are, Ruddiman's Life of Fergusson, MS. Letter to Mr. Ruddiman from Walter Fergusson, Esq., Writer to the Signet, Edinburgh, 8th December, 1778, MS.

"The name of Fergusson was not numerous in that part, [Tarland] of

youngest daughter of John Forbes, tacksman of Templeton, Hillockhead and Wellhead of Kildrummy, likewise in Aberdeenshire, a cadet of the family of Tolquhon.[1]

At the time of our poet's birth, his father was in the employment, as clerk, of Mr. Robert Baillie, the only person then established in the capital (*tempora mutantur*) as a haberdasher.

Mr. Fergusson removed to Edinburgh about 1746, much about the time the troubles of that period had ceased. The merchant with whom, in Aberdeen, he "served an apprenticeship," had died: and it was in consequence of this event that Mr Fergusson pushed his way to the Capital.[2] He had only been in Edinburgh three days, when, from the excellent character which he sustained, he obtained the situation with Mr. Baillie, not however, significantly remarks Campbell, "without the precaution of security having been given that he was

the North. A family of the name of Fergusson possessed the estate of Auchtererne in Cromar, from the reign of David II. to that of James V., when it seems to have become extinct.

"In the 17th century, the lands of Badiforrow, near Inverury, were possessed by another family of the name of Fergusson (which intermarried with the Burnets), which afterwards acquired the estate of Pitfour. A third family of the name possessed the lands of Kinmundy in the last century: the ancestor of this branch of the name is said to have settled in Aberdeenshire about the year 1690. I am not aware of any other families of the name who held lands in Aberdeenshire: and although he may have sprung from one or other of them, I regret that I am unable to connect William Fergusson, the father of the poet, with any of those I have named."—*Communicated by Mr. Joseph Robertson, editor of the Edinburgh Courant Newspaper.*

I may add that in a letter (now in my possession) from Henry Fergusson, to a former companion, he humorously claims a royal lineage. "I am the son of the ancient, the royal Fergus," Fergus—son; and in the answer, his friend, a "Mr. William Dick of London," says, "I am heartily glad to hear that ye son of the brave and the antient Fergus was well." 5th July 1765. Inverarity MSS.

1 Communicated by John Forbes, Esq., Writer, Old Meldrum, present representative of the family.

2 Letter of Walter Fergusson, Esq., W. S., to Mr. Ruddiman. This is the well-known gentleman who built St. James' Square, Edinburgh. He forms the subject of an extraordinary panegyric to Claudero.

of good principles."[1] Mr. Baillie was one of the magistrates of the city.[2]

In his youth, says Mr. Ruddiman, "the father of Robert had also a turn to poetry, which he exercised in little satirical rhymes on occasional subjects, though his natural modesty and good disposition never allowed him to run into malicious personality."[3] However, Mr. Ruddiman continues, "he soon relinquished the unprofitable service of the Muses, from the necessity he felt of pursuing a more probable prospect of subsistence."[3] The necessity herein indicated was indeed most urgent. From a letter to his brother-in-law, one of a series, all unpublished, with which I have been favoured by Mr. Forbes, Writer, Old Meldrum, I find that he was greatly straitened. I shall give the letter *in extenso*, as it at once introduces us into the humble household into which so very recently our poet had been ushered. Robert, it will be observed, is spoken of as a 'thriving boy.'

I. WILLIAM FERGUSSON TO MR. JOHN FORBES OF ROUNDLICHNOT.

EDINBURGH, 19*th December*, 1751.

SIR,

Your favours of 15th I duly received, and am glade thereby to learn that you and Mrs. Forbes are well. You take no notice which of the two ways I proposed was most convenient with respect to reimbursing you for value of the meall. Meantime your correspondent at Aberdeen may be advised to cask yr about 3 bolls newest miln'd meall. Ship it on board the first boat

1 Alex. Campbell, 'Life of Fergusson,' in History of Scottish Poetry p. 289.
2 Ibid.
3 MS. 'Sketches of the Life of Fergusson.'

from that place for Lieth [Leith], marked 'R. Baillie, Edinburgh,' by which it will be brought to Edinburgh at sight, and give me an opportunity of paying freight, shore-dues, and cartage myself, and upon sight of price of meall, cask, couperage, shipping, &c., shall order your money in the way seems most agreeable. As to my situation, it is same as formerly, and can't propose to make any advance on my wages, with my present master. It's not impossible to find more encouragement in the place, but my loss is want either of interest or acquaintances to recommend me; and had I not continued my family in the country until I furnished a room and saved £9 over, I could not [have] had subsistence, as you'll see by an abstract of last year's expencess. I have sometimes some shillings when I pay money away to persons on my masters account. Write's at spare hours to some acquaintances, for which gets complements, either a cheese, a ham, a cap or frock to some of the little ones; and particularly I have the charge of posting up a dealer's books, which can be expede in six of my spare hours in the week, for which I have 40s. sterling yearly: last summer, in the mornings, I wrote eight quire of papper at a penny a-page, for which I'm to get £3, 4s. My wife joins in her love to you, Mrs. Forbes, and sister when you see her. Rob, the young one, is a thriving boy. Harry is well advanced in his Latine, exponing Ovid, M. and C. Nepos. Babie has been tender of late, but now thought better. However much you have reason to think I have been on the ceremony in not writing so oft as you might have expected, believe me no emergency happening in the course of my situation made me the more easy. Shall be glade to know if I could in the least be usefull to you here, or if [you] had ever any business in the place, that might fall under my care, the same should be negotiat with all expedition.

Grain is now on the falling here, having last Friday sold 20d. p. boll cheaper at Haddington than day before. Meall sold here last week at 12d. and 11½d. p. peck, sells this week at 11d.—I am, Sir,

Your affᵉ. brother, and most hubˡ. servᵗ.,

WILL. FERGUSSON.

ABSTRACT OF EXPENCESS, ANNO 1751.

House-rent,	£1	10	0
Coals,	2	12	0
Candles,	0	19	6
Bread,	4	6	8
Milk,	2	4	5
Flesh and fish,	3	6	2½
Salt, greens, and barley,	0	8	8
* * * [torn away with wafer],	1	10	4
Washing,	0	13	0
Quarter-payments for children, &c.,	1	15	0
	£19	5	9½

N.B.—4s. 2½d. and chance for shoes, shirts, clothes, &c.

Robert Fergusson was thus born emphatically 'a poor man's son.' He is said in the preceding Letter to have been "a thriving boy;" but this was written while he was only in his first year. Irving, Sommers, and Campbell inform us that "he was of a remarkably delicate constitution," and that, "while under the influence of infant diseases, he was frequently in a very 'weakly state,'"—a circumstance, observes the last biographer, "which peculiarly endeared him to his mother," who was "a woman of great worth and piety."[1]

Towards the close of the year 1754, Mr. Fergusson

1 Lives, Irving, Sommers. Campbell, in loc.

was induced to leave Mr. Baillie, by a promise of increased emolument from a Mr. Hope of Midhope, near (it is understood) Edinburgh, whither accordingly he removed.

The following Letter, which was likewise addressed to his brother-in-law, indicates that the change was greatly to the worse: indicates sorrowfully to us a continuous chequered struggle for subsistence, such as that which, much about the same time, the father of Burns was called upon to make.

II. WILLIAM FERGUSSON TO MR. JOHN FORBES OF ROUNDLICHNOT.

MIDHOPE, 17*th February*, 1755.

DEAR BROTHER,

After receipt of yours of 16th December last, I went in to Edinburgh in consequence of my bargain with Mr. Hope, and was a fortnight extremely busie in settling accounts for and with Mr. Baillie, and we parted exceeding good friends; and ever since my return here, have been exceedingly hurried, otherways I would have wrote you ere now. As to Mr. Hope's business, I'm determined to have nothing to do with either him or it either, after Martinmas. I wish it may be in my power to stay till then: last half-year he chang'd no less than six clerks; he is a most insulting tyrant. In short, he is quite destitute of the most, if not all the social virtues; and altho' the neighbourhood all agree that he behaves with more decency to me than any he ever had before, yet he is so implacable in every respect that I'm weary of my life, and will be unhappy untill the expiration of our term. The gentlewoman that recommended me to Lady Mary Deskford is Miss Billy Fraser, Milliner in Edinburgh, who, I suppose, is a

niece of the late Collonell Ogilvie's. I make no doubt but you'll take the opportunity if you find it favourable when Lord Deskford is in the North, as I also hope Mr. Morison will do, to speak [to] his Lordship on my account, as this place is intollerable, and that my family requires my being in constant business. You may be sure that, had this place been any way agreeable, I would not have hesitate about settling my family in this countrey; but it is better they stay in Edinburgh, as I hope to be with them myself nine months hence, if spared.

You certainly have interpret my last wrong, when you write that I talk'd lightly of £25. I know the value of money better than that; and shall use all possible means to keep myself in some business or other, altho' the present has but a dire aspect. Shall be glade to hear more frequently from you now, while under this so arbitrary jurisdiction, because to hear of friends' welfare will contribute much to lighten the burden.

Complements to Mrs. Forbes and Sister.

I am, Dear Brother,

Your most affectionate brother and
humble servant,

WILL. FERGUSSON.[1]

From another Letter, which was addressed to Mr. Forbes by Mr. Morison, factor to Lord Deskford, it appears that Mr. Fergusson had previously written direct to Mr. Morison. That gentleman says:—

1 The Mr. Hope here referred to is known; but it is not deemed expedient to record "in print" his character.

III. WALTER MORISON, ESQ., TO MR. JOHN FORBES.

DESKFORD, *December 7th*, 1754.

DEAR SIR,

I wrote you in my last concerning the application, he (a friend of Mr. Morison's) wants to Lord Deskford: as I told you my difficulties, so within a few days ago, I was in company with a gentleman who told me that his Lordship had undertaken fully as much as he could make out, and anoyther mentioned a case that confirmed that, for Lady Mary had been addressed in favour of a gentlewoman of this country, living at Edinburgh with her husband in great straits, that her Ladyship would speak to her Lord, she answered that she was very sorry she could do nothing presently, for L[ord] D[eskford] could not get done for severalls [what] he had on hand, and suggested that that gentlewoman should apply to some oythers. Therefor I have written Mr. Fergusson yt it seems needless to write just now, but to refer [defer?] till his Lordship comes to the countrey.

I am, Dr. Sir,

Your obedt. and faithfull Servt.,

WALT. MORISON.

Mr. Fergusson having left Mr. Hope as anticipated in Martinmas 1755, was 'once more thrown upon the world.' Fortunately, almost immediately thereafter a company of upholsterers, Messrs. Wardrop and Peat, Carrubber's Close, Edinburgh, were requiring an experienced accountant. Application was made to Mr. Fergusson, who at once and gratefully accepted the situation *pro tempore*. He was diligent in the discharge of his duties, and in every respect gave his employers satisfaction: but con-

tinued to be on the outlook for a situation more remunerating.

At the close of his letter to Mr. Forbes, we have seen that he expected his brother-in-law and Mr. Morison to use their influence with Lord Deskford, "when his Lordshould be in the country," and Mr. Morison had "referred application until his Lordship was in the North." Meantime, notwithstanding his earnest, willing exertions, the former difficulties and privations still unhappily surrounded this most upright, hard-working, worthy man. Another letter affords us light to see the struggles of this period:

IV. WILLIAM FERGUSSON TO MR. JOHN FORBES [THEN] FACTOR ON THE ESTATE OF MELDRUM.

EDINBURGH, *March 9th*, 1756.

DEAR BROTHER,

I was glade to find by your last that Mrs. Forbes and you were well, and of your success in obtaining an addition to your living. I thought to have wrote you before now, but am so much hurried that I have scarce time to eat and sleep sufficiently, which is the more uneasy, that it adds nothing to my gain. The Company I serve are 15 Wrights who have entered in contract to carry on the branch's of business. The upholstery goods and hardware are sold for account of the Company, but all the household furniture is sold for the proper account of the respective proprietors. It is lodged in a large wareroom, blended together for sale, which creats an endless writing and constant attendance, and which [what?] is still more uncomfortable, none of these gentlemen understand accounts, nor the trouble in keeping them regular; but every one of them has a particular veneration for meum, so that I have not a far-

thing value of a perquizite, nor time either to oblige a friend nor gain a sixpence; so that my sallery of £25 realy can't be a subsistence to my family; exclusive of coal, candle, and cloathes which are absolutely necessary, omitting house rent, amounts only to £4 3s. 4d. a head per annum: and till now, since I came to this place never felt so much the loss of time to do something in, for myself: besides [loss of] perquizites at paying of accounts. It's pity you had so little time with Lord Deskford when in the North: if you could use the freedom to write his Lordship under cover to me soon, representing the connection between us, and with as much modest assurance as possible solicit his intrest to procure me any settlement in the Customs above a Tidesman it would be singularly obliging: and if once introduced to his Lordship in that channel, possibly I may get your intrest supported by some others in this place, who can ascertain my diligence and sobriety.

Shall be glad to hear from you soon. Your sister after a long struggle between two opinions is at length to commence a settler here after Whitsunday next; for particulars I referr you to what she writes herewith. Hary still unprovided, from a gratefull sense of your civilities desires to be remembred to you, Mrs. Forbes and Jack Auld, and we all join in our compliments to Mrs. Forbes. My wife has had a web for severall months on the stocks which I hope will soon be ready for launching.

I remain, D[ear] B[rother],

Your affe. Brother, &c.

Will. Fergusson.[1]

1 While with Messrs. Wardrop and Peat, Mr. Fergusson framed a very ingenious and useful 'Book of Rates,' the original MS. of which belongs to me. There are various blank pages in it: and on these our poet subsequently entered various interesting Memoranda, as shall emerge.

We are not informed of the success which attended this proposed written application to Lord Deskford, on the failure of opportunity "when his Lordship was in the countrey:" nor indeed, whether it was made at all. The preceding letter, however, had only been despatched a few days, when Mr. Fergusson obtained a much more agreeable, though not greatly more remunerative situation, as clerk, with a namesake, Walter Fergusson, Esq., Writer to the Signet, Edinburgh.[1] He continued with Mr. Fergusson upwards of six years.[2]

CHAPTER II.

1756—1765.

Fireside—Education—School—Philp—High School—Gilchrist—Progress—Ill health—Anecdote—Grammar School of Dundee—Bursary—Extracts—St. Andrews—University—Letter—Vacation—Visit to Aberdeenshire—Letters—Father and Mother—Situations.

It was on entering the service of Mr. Fergusson that Robert was first put to school. Amid all his toils and trials, William Fergusson never forgot the worth of religious training, and the usefulness of education in the 'upbringing' of his children. When his whole yearly income was hardly £20, and when not less than five individuals were wholly dependent on his exertions, we find that £1 15s. was spared for "school payments," a fact which cannot receive too much prominence.

Robert went to school in 1757, about the sixth year of his age, having been thus long kept back (as it is in-

1 See note 2, p. xxvii. 2 Ibid.

considerately reckoned in Scotland), from his delicate state of health.[1]

His mother, however, had previously taught him his 'letters;' and from all that I have read and been told of Mrs. Fergusson, I feel satisfied, that long before he attended school, the picture so sweetly, so naturally portrayed by the 'sweet singer' of Brechin, good Alexander Laing, would be frequently realized; nor am I unwarranted in supposing further, from the affection which peculiarly 'went out' from his parents upon their "darling gentle Robert," as they were wont to call him, that the lyric equally expresses, even then, their hopes and wishes.

Let us become as little children, and listen to this felicitous heart-utterance.

THE A B C.[2]

AIR, "*Clean Pease Strae.*"

If ye'd be daddie's bonnie bairn,
An' mammie's only pet,
Your A B brod, and lesson time,
Ye maunna ance forget,
Gin ye would be a clever man,
An' usefu' i' your day,
It's now your time to learn at e'en
The A B C.

To win our laddie meat and claes,
Has aye been a' our care;
To get you made a scholar neist,
We'll toil baith late an' ear.

1 It is recorded that Burns, too, only entered school in the sixth year of his age.—Cunningham. Lockhart. In loc.

2 From 'wayside Flowers; being Poems and Songs, by Alexander Laing, Brechin.' Edinburgh, 1 vol. 12mo, 1846, pp. 157-8. These 'Flowers' have, indeed, all the dewy freshness and modest beauty of those of the 'wayside.'

An' gin we need, an' hae our health,
We'll join the nicht to day,
Sae tak' your brod, and learn at e'en
The A B C.

Wha kens but ye may get a school,
An' syne ye'll win our bread?
Wha kens, but in a pu'pit yet
We'll see you wag your head?
Our minister an' dominie,
Were laddies i' their day,
An' had, like you, to learn at e'en
The A B C.

Now come an' read your lesson ower,
Till ance your supper cool;
O what wad mony a laddie gi'e
To hae a father's school?
To be a mither's only care,
As ye are ilka day,
Shou'd mak' you like to learn at e'en
The A B C.

His first teacher was a Mr. Philp, in Niddry's Wynd, a teacher of English, says Sommers, who knew him well, "of respectability in his line."[1]

He had only continued with Mr. Philp for "about six months,"[2] so rapid was his progress, when he was deemed qualified to enter the first Latin class of the High school.

From an examination of the register of this world-famous academy, kindly made for me by Leonard Schmitz, Esq., the present accomplished and respected rector, it appears that Fergusson was a pupil of Mr. John Gilchrist,[3] in the years 1758, 1760, and 1761.

In the roll of Mr. Gilchrist of 1759, the name of Fergusson does not occur, though, remarks Mr. Schmitz, "I

1 Sommers' Life, p. 9. 2 *Ibid.*, and Campbell, and Irving.
3 See appendix C.

would not infer from this, that he was not at the school during that year, for in those days the records seem to have been kept rather carelessly." Mr. Schmitz is correct.

Fergusson was at the High School in 1759 likewise, but, from ill health, was only enabled to attend desultorily.[1]

His progress at the High School was equally promising and praiseworthy with that made under Mr. Philp. Even under the disadvantage of broken study, because of precarious health, observes one of his biographers, the late Alexander Peterkin, Esq., S.S.C., Edinburgh, "he equalled any, and surpassed numbers of his class-fellows."[2]

He kept fully abreast, says Mr. Chambers, "of his companions, a temporary application being sufficient to bring him up to any point which the class had attained in his absence;"[3] a twofold testimony which is borne out by Irving, Sommers, Campbell, Gray, and indeed by all his biographers.[4]

He was of an inquiring, must-be-satisfied disposition from his earliest years; and Dr. Irving records, "that the interrogations which he put concerning any subject

1 Dr. Steven, in his History of the High School, informs us (p. 122, No. vii., Appendix), that a 'general matriculation register, alphabetically arranged, was not commenced till 1827, previous to which year each master enrolled, though not so regularly as could have been wished, in a common register, the names of his pupils who had subscribed to the library. But even in the early period, when such a subscription was not compulsory, there were few who did not contribute.' Mr. Schmitz, on looking into the records of the library, found, that in the year 1758, Robert Fergusson contributed one shilling, and in 1761, half-a-crown, to the library fund, which, in the circumstances, were certainly "widow's mites." Fergusson is duly entered in the roll of celebrated 'High School Pupils.' See Steven, p. 207. No. xi.

2 Life prefixed to the octavo London edition of the Poems, p. 15, 1 vol., 1807. This edition was subsequently transferred to Scott of Greenock; and it is accordingly to be met with, with the imprint, 'William Scott, Greenock, 1810.'

3 Life in Emin. Scotsmen. In loc.

4 Irving, Life, 1799, 1800, 1801, &c. Sommers, Life, 1803. Campbell, Life, in Introd. to Hist. of Scott. Poetry. Gray, Rev. Jas., Life in edition of Poems, 1 vol. 12mo. Edinburgh. 1821.

that attracted his notice, often puzzled those who were much older than himself."[1] An anecdote is related of him, while at the High School, in his seventh or eighth year, which strikingly reveals his ingenuous and susceptible mind. It was while his studies were interrupted by ill health, that he first acquired a taste for books; and it is a somewhat remarkable fact, that while yet a mere child, his chief delight was to pore over the Bible. The Proverbs of Solomon were his especial favourite; and the anecdote respects them.

One day he entered his mother's apartment in tears, calling on her to "whip him." On inquiry being made as to the reason for such a very extraordinary request, he sobbed, "O mother! he that spareth the rod, hateth the child;"[2] a noticeable illustration of the vivid impression that his reading made.

Having attended the usual term of four years at the High School of Edinburgh,[3] without, however, entering the rector's class, Fergusson was next transferred to the 'Grammar School of Dundee,'[4] which was then, as now, celebrated.

Through the influence, it is understood, of Lord Finlater, his father had obtained a presentation, in favour of Robert, to a mortification or bursary,[5] by the Reverend David Fergusson of Strathmartine, which provided for

1 Life, p. 7, 1799; p. 4, 1801.

2 Peterkin, Life, p. 15.

3 The usual practice is to remain under one of the classical masters four consecutive sessions, and two years, or at least one, under the rector. —Dr. Steven. Hist. of High School. *Ante.*

4 Considerable confusion has prevailed anent Fergusson's transference to Dundee. None of his biographers seem to have been aware that his education at Dundee Grammar School was from the same fund with that which supported him at St. Andrews. "For some reason or other, which does not appear, he was now removed to the Grammar School of Dundee," says his tasteful biographer, in the 'Lives of Scottish Poets, by the Society of Ancient Scots.' [London, 1822. 3 vols. 12mo.] A remark which is now elucidated.

5 Equivalent to an exhibition in the English universities.

the "mantinnance and education of two poor male children," of his own surname, at the Grammar School of Dundee, and the College of St Andrews.

The deed[1] "appoints and ordains" that "the two children of the quality foresaid, from the saids age of nine years untill they attain to fourteen years compleat be maintained, educate and brought up at the Grammar School of Dundee, and be boarded with one of the surname of Fergusson in case there be any that can do the same, and failzing of that in any other honest house, within the said Burgh of a good report, and that at such rates and prices yearly or quarterly as the said patrons and administrators shall think fitt; and be furnished (the saids children) with sufficient cloaths and necessaries for their bodies, head and feet: their coats being always of a grey colour lined, with blue sleeves."

A leaf having been abstracted from the Minute-Book of the 'Trust,' I am unable to state accurately when Fergusson first entered the Grammar School of Dundee: but the following Excerpts from the Sederunt-Book, which are inserted immediately after the abstracted leaf (on which it may be assumed the first entry was recorded), furnish us with a notice of the poet while at the Grammar School of Dundee: and likewise of his translation to the College of St. Andrews.

I. Sederunt of the Patrons att Dundee this sixth day of December one thousand, seven hundred and sixty-four years.

John Barclay, Esq., Provost of Dundee, and James Graham, Esq., of Metthie.

1 I am indebted to Christopher Kerr, Esq., Writer, Dundee, present Agent for the mortification, for a verbatim double of the deed: and for other extracts annexed.

Mr. Graham represented that Robert Fergusson, son of William Fergusson, Writer in Edinburgh, one of the boys upon the mortification, was at Martinmas last [November 1764], fourteen years of age,[1] and consequently could be no longer at the Grammar School of Dundee: and having sent for the boy, and Peter Murray with whom he is boarded; and he [Fergusson] signifying his inclination to follow out his learning and go to the Colledge of St. Andrews. The Patrons recommended to the said Patrick Murray, to acquaint the boy's father of his intention and to procure from the Presbitry of Dundee, a certificate of his capacity for being put to the Colledge; upon which they would present him accordingly.

II. Dundee, 7th December.

Present, John Barclay of Dundee, James Graham of Metthie. } Patrons.

Compeared William Fergusson, Writer in Edinburgh, who produced to the Patrons proper certificates of his son Robert Fergusson's being properly qualified for going to the Colledge: The Patrons did therefore by missive letter of this date[2] present the said Robert Fergusson to the United Colledges of St. Leonards and St. Salvator at St. Andrews, per the time limited by the mortification, from and after the first day of November last, with an allowance of ten pounds sterling yearly, payable at Whitsunday and Martimas by equal portions, commencing the first terms payment at Whitsunday next.

[Signed] James Graham,
Jas. Barclay.

The 'missive letter' referred to in the latter Excerpt

1 This corrects the misprint 1751 mentioned in note 1, p. xxv.
2 See Appendix D.

was published by the late James M'Cosh, Esq., in the Dundee 'Warder' Newspaper, 28th December, 1841, in an article relative to bursaries connected with St. Andrews University.[1]

I give this letter in my Appendix,[2] but shall introduce here a very interesting one (likewise printed in the 'Warder') regarding it, from the father of the poet. It was addressed to Mr. Edmonstone, then clerk to the University.

IV. WILLIAM FERGUSSON TO MR. EDMONSTONE, ST. ANDREWS.

Warriston's Close, Edinburgh,
4 *May*, 1765.

Sir,

I hereby take the liberty to annex a copy state of the Fergusson's Mortification at Dundee as at Candlemas 1762, in right whereof my son Robert was presented to a bursary at your College of 7th December last, for four years, at ten pounds sterling yearly, in consequence whereof he was admitted, and the presentation lodged with yourself the 8th of said month. Which copy state, if the same may be done with propriety, you will please be so good as lay before the Principal and Professors of the University, together with the patron's presentation, in order to draw upon James Graham of Meathie, Esq., who has the management of the funds, for ten pounds sterling, in terms of said presentation, and which I beg you will be so good as negotiat: out of which sum you will please pay Messrs. Wilson and Morton's fees, at three half guineas each: Mrs. Gibson for the boy's board,

1 I am indebted to Mr. Chambers for directing my attention to this article: and to the unfailing kindness of Mr. Kerr for a double. The originals were in possession of the late Mr. M'Cosh, who had promised to forward them to me, very shortly before his lamented death.

2 Appendix D.

at the rate of £35 Scots per quarter, from 9th December last to the end of the session, together with any other dues that are usuall, not already paid. I observed it was proposed to pay £5 at Whitsunday and Martinmas yearly, but as that is a postscript, and no part of the signed deed, and that from the situation the fund appears to be in at present, there is no necessity to divide it, it is hoped that Mr. Graham upon being advised that the whole must be had at this term he will pay the draft; and the truth is, at present I am not in circumstances to make any other shift. Your compliance will be an indelible obligation, besides whatever gratification you think proper to charge for your trouble shall be approved of, and your answer if possible before the breaking up of the Session, will be esteemed a singular favour.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble Servant,

WILL. FERGUSSON.

This letter advances our narrative to 'May 1765.' But I must regress. In the interval between the expiry of the term at the Grammar School of Dundee and the opening of the first Session of College thereafter, Mrs. Fergusson with her son Robert paid a visit to her relatives in Aberdeenshire.

Through the attention and zeal of Mr. Forbes of Old Meldrum, I am enabled to illustrate this period with two letters from our poet's father, addressed respectively to Mrs. Fergusson, while at Roundlichnot, and to Mr. Forbes, her brother.[1]

1 This is the uncle whose conduct towards Fergusson, on the occasion of another visit, has been so grievously (as shall appear in its proper place) misrepresented by Dr. Irving and others.

V. WILLIAM FERGUSSON TO MRS. FERGUSSON.

EDINBURGH, 17*th Aug.* 1764.

MY DEAREST,

As I hope this will reach you before you set out from Roundlichnot, I hereby acknowledge the receipt of your favours of 13th. This day has removed my anxiety's occasioned by frequent apprehensions of your having met with some disaster in your journey by the bad weather or otherways. I notice your resolution with regard to the time of setting out for home, and approve thereof, notwithstanding I have had a solitary fortnight already, and in view of a third lonely Sabbath, the only time I can command as my own. It gives me no small satisfaction to find, you have had so agreeable a meeting with your brother and sisters, and that Rob has held out the journey. I arrived from Saltonfield, Sunday morning by 9 o'clock, when it rained so hard in this country that I was wet [to] the skin. Your linnen is blued, and at the lapping, and will be in soon: the cotton piece, not yet off the field, as they are determined for a good colour. Your compts to Kylahuntlie came too late, for they set out for Badenoch with Inverhall Tuesday last and left compts to you. I would have wrote Mr. Forbes and thankd him for his civilities, but had only time to scrawl this for you in the office, during which performance I had twenty interruptions. Meantime I make offer of compts to your brother; Mrs. Forbes, the Aunt in case the care about her cat will allow her to accept of them: and to all other friends and relatives in the neighbourhood. It's become dark, so must conclude with wishing Mr. Forbes and family all

possible happiness, and yourself a speedy and safe return.

I am, My Dearest,

Your aff^{a} Husband,

WILL. FERGUSSON.

VI. WILLIAM FERGUSSON TO MR. JOHN FORBES.

EDINBURGH, 13*th September*, 1764.

DEAR SIR,

I had the pleasure of your obliging favours of 7th curt. advising of your family's welfare, at which we are all extremely glad. I observe with some concern that the aunt's affection's for the cat is not in any degree alienate, considering that now she has an opportunity of seeing an object that merits her warmest affections: and as my wife has heard nothing from her by this opportunity, she is suspicious of having offended her by saying something she has thought hurtfull to Gibbie's character. My wife was not a bit wearied on her return, and has been in a much better state of health since, than for some years past, and has recovered a keen appetite. It will give me real pleasure to know so oft as opportunity permitts how you, Mrs. Forbes, the Aunt and little Jamie do, as it is the only thing next to a personal interview, which the uninterrupted hurry of business prevents. Baby and her husband are well, and with my wife, Hary, Rob and Pegie join with me in most affectionat compliments to you, Mrs. Forbes, and young son, the Aunt and all other connections in your neighbourhood: being in a hurry,

I am, Dear Sir,

Your most aff^{e}. Brother and humble Serv^{t},

WILL. FERGUSSON.

Please mind the Aunt to call for a ¼ lib of snuff from the waggoner.

These letters, with their quiet humour concerning the venerable spinster whose 'mull' is replenished, and her cat Gibbie, present Mr. Fergusson in what in Scotland is very well described by good spirits. He was now in a permanent situation. After remaining with his namesake Mr. Fergusson, W. S., for upwards of six years, he was appointed, by the influence of Lord Deskford, to the office of clerk to the prisoners of war in the castle of Edinburgh, in which situation Campbell states "he was of the utmost service to Government, as well as to the unfortunate sufferers." This office however was only a temporary sinecure. In 1762-3 he obtained the situation of managing-clerk in the Linen department of the British Linen Co. in the Canongate of Edinburgh: in which he remained, with the greatest respect, until his death in 1767, never having any great emoluments, but being much less pushed, and more, if the colloquialism is allowable, his own master.[1]

1 I have stated that Mr. Fergusson was in the Linen department. I mention this because the Company, now perhaps the wealthiest Banking Establishment in Scotland, carried on the Linen trade consentaneously with the Bank. I must acknowledge the pains-taking attention and courtesy of Mr. Wilson, present Cashier, and Mr. Goodsir, present Secretary of the British Linen Co. in Edinburgh. Both of these gentlemen kindly superintended a careful search of the books of the period, preserved in the office, with a view to discover some notices of Mr. Fergusson, but it was found that the books which remain were solely relative to the Banking department; those, it appears, of the Linen department having been nearly all destroyed many years ago.

CHAPTER III.

1765—1768.

Retrospect—St. Andrews University—Matriculation—the Church—Memorabilia — Progress — Professor Wilkie — Professor Vilant — Statement and Explanation—Dr. Irving—First poetry — Elegy on the death of Professor Gregory—Fellow-students—Anecdotes—John Hogg — Anecdotes — Tennant and Wilson—Anecdote—Precentorship — Anecdote—Youthful fray—Temporary Extrusion — Refutation of Dr. Irving and Explanation—Principals Tullidelph and Lee —Chambers—Robert Burns—Henry Fergusson — Letter—Dramatic Fragment—Wallace—Progress and Acquirements—Anecdotes—Ruddiman—Greenlaw—Leaves College.

Fergusson, we have found, was at home in Edinburgh in September 1764 after his vacation rambles among the hills and woods of Lichnot. On the 6th of December of the same year, he "compeared before the Trustees of the Mortification," and stated it to be his wish "to pursue his learning." On the 7th of the same month he obtained the "missive letter" of presentation to the Principal and Masters of the University: and I find, by the courtesy of Mr. M'Bean, present Librarian to St. Andrews University, that he matriculated in February 1765, about two months after the issue of the missive letter.[1]

1 I have been thus minute in respect of the close of the poet's attendance at the Grammar School of Dundee, and conjunct transference to St. Andrews, from the circumstance that Alexander Campbell and other biographers have affirmed that on leaving Dundee he returned to Edinburgh, and there pursued for one session his University course. This, as has been shown, is errant. I account for the statement, which was originally made by Campbell, by mentioning that in the Matriculation-Book of the University of Edinburgh, there is a 'Robert Ferguson' entered under Session 1765, which apparently has misled Campbell, who in

When Fergusson stated that it was his wish "to pursue his learning" by going to College from the Grammar School, his design was in accordance with the earnest wish of his parents, to study with a view to the church. His great-grandfather, on his father's side, had been a clergyman in the Church of Scotland, and this had its share of influence with his father in fixing upon the ministry for Robert. It cannot be supposed that so early as in his fourteenth year, Fergusson could personally have any decided resolutions in respect of the choice made for him. However, he revered his father and mother, and their will was his law. Accordingly, even thus early, we find him inscribing his name in his class-books, 'Robt. Fergusson, Student of Divinity.'[1] He entered the college with the highest promise. His progress at the Grammar School of Dundee had been, as in Edinburgh, rapid and praiseworthy. Dr. Irving and other biographers, designate it "surprising;" and we have seen that his father at once obtained certificates of "full qualification."[2] On matriculating in February 1765, he became a student in the Humanity [Latin] and Greek Classes, under Professors Wilson and Morton. But the Classics were not his favourite study; or rather, with the petulance of a youth of lively parts, who did not wish any longer to be subjected to the labour of hard study,

all likelihood consulted this authority. The entry is as follows, 'Rot. Ferguson, Discipuli D. Gul. Wallace Legis Municipalis Profess. 1765:' and very possibly this too was the origin of the statement as to Fergusson's having studied the Law.

I am obliged to Blair Wilson, Esq., Secretary of the University, for consultation of the Matriculation-Book.

1 A book, with this inscription, was formerly in the possession of Mrs. Inverarity, elder sister of the Poet. It was entitled, "A Defence of the Church Government, Faith, Worship, and Spirit of the Presbyterians. By John Anderson, M.A."

2 It is to be regretted, that although kind friends in Dundee and St. Andrews have made every search and inquiry, these certificates have not been recovered.

he expressed his contempt for them. He said, Mr. Ruddiman states, "that Virgil and Horace were the only Latin authors he would ever look at while he was at the university."[1] I have now in my possession his college copy of Xenophon's Anabasis;[2] and it is a characteristic relic. While he has duly written, 'Ex libris Robt. Fergusson' on the fly-leaf, underneath, his wayward pen has sketched a rude drawing of a harp.

His classical attainments, however, were respectable; and in all his classes he faithfully performed the prescribed exercises, making up, by severe impulsive application at one time, what might have been lost by previous immethodical or relaxed effort.

There is no register of matriculation in St. Andrews University, beyond the first entry of the Bursar student; and indeed, up to 1783, it seems no correct roll even of the general students was kept, so that unfortunately we cannot now be informed as to the order of the curriculum pursued by Fergusson. It is more than probable that he took the usual course. We find, that very soon he obtained the marked approbation, nay the friendship of Professor Wilkie; and long subsequent to his death, Professor Vilant, and Principal Hill (who was a fellow-student), spoke of him with esteem and admiration.[3]

1 MS. Lives.

2 Foulis, MDCC.LXIV. Tom. iv. In a corner is marked "P[ai]d 2s."

3 It has even been said that Fergusson had so far recommended himself to Professor Wilkie, that he was chosen by that learned person, "to read his lectures to his class, when sickness or other causes prevented his own performance of the duty." This is incorrect; and it originated, as explained by Professor Vilant, in Wilkie's having employed Fergusson "one summer and part of another, in making a fair transcript of his academical lectures;" a service which equally testifies the Professor's approbation of our Poet. The anxiety of Dr. Irving to disprove the "reading of the lectures," is somewhat, he must allow me, with all good humour to say, amusing. He ridicules the idea of a youth of "sixteen or seventeen" mounting, as he elegantly expresses it, "the professorial rostrum," forgetting in his endeavour to round a period, which certainly is not the most felicitous specimen of the author of "English Composition," that

He was frequently taken by Wilkie to his farm, about four miles from St. Andrews ; and the late Dr. Nairne of Pittenweem remembered that Fergusson very often accompanied the eccentric, but truly warm-hearted Professor to his father's manse at Anstruther, where he was ever a welcome guest.[1]

The powers of conversation and fascinating gaiety and galliardice, which so remarkably distinguished Fergusson, were manifested from the very first. He was only a very short while a civis of the university, when he became known among his fellow-students "as a fellow of infinite jest, and most excellent fancy." He had not been long at college when 'certain Macaronic satires against some of the masters,'[2] were ascribed to him ; and all his biographers have agreed in stating that it was while at the university that he "first committed the sin of rhyme."

They have all, however, united in saying that none of these "first blossoms" are preserved in the published poems.

His tasteful biographer, in the 'Lives of Scottish Poets by Members of the Society of Ancient Scots,' only expresses the general opinion, when he states that "while pursuing his studies at St Andrews, he first began to direct his attention to poetry, and wrote many occasional pieces, which attracted the particular notice of the Professors, as well as of his fellow-students ; but none of his published poems can be referred to so early a period; all

almost contemporarily, a youth of 'eighteen or thereby,' hight James Hay Beattie, was not only mounting occasionally, but occupying as professor, the professorial rostrum of Aberdeen; and *risum, teneatis amici*, while I inform you that this staunch defender of the dignity of the professorial rostrum was then mounting the rostrum of authorship himself, a venerable Methuselah of 'seventeen or eighteen.'

1 Communicated by the late Professor Tennant of St. Andrews.

2 Ruddiman, MS. Lives.

of them have the marks of long subsequent productions."[1] I must dissent from this opinion. 'The Elegy on the Death of Dr. Gregory,' was unquestionably composed immediately on the occasion; and his demise took place on the 13th day of April, 1765, when our poet had only been three months at college, and when he was only midway in his 15th year.[2]

The Elegy, in its prevailing tone, is that of respectful regret. But we have probably in it, correctly observes Mr. Chambers, an example of the length to which he ventured in his satirical effusions. Bewailing the loss that the scientific world had sustained by the decease of this learned person, and enumerating various instances of his sagacity, he says, with irrepressible waggery,

> He could, by Euclid, prove langsyne,
> A ganging point composed a line;
> By numbers, too, he could divine,
> When he did read,
> That three times three just made up nine;
> But now he's dead.

All his satires must have been of this playful nature; for, from all that has appeared, his Professors and fellow-students manifested nothing but kindly feelings towards him, which too, he equally reciprocated.[3] His vivacity and tricksy humour have been given in a single dash. Many years ago, Mr. James Inverarity, a nephew of the

1 Lives, vol. ii., Part iv. p. 60.

2 I have accordingly placed this Elegy first in the poems. It was not published till 1772-3, in the author's volume; but it was one of those which he found among his papers, and gave to Mr. Ruddiman to add to those from the Magazine.

3 I am indebted to the venerable Principal Lee of Edinburgh, for a list of a few of the more [ultimately] distinguished fellow-students of Fergusson. Professor Playfair, Principal Hill, Dr. John Hill, Dr. Andrew Duncan, the late Honourable Henry Erskine, his brother, Lord Chancellor Erskine, Dr. James Brown, Dr. William Ritchie, late of Edinburgh, Dr. George Campbell, father of Lord Campbell, Mr. David Wilkie, father of Sir David.

poet, had the curiosity to ask one of the janitors of the university, if he recollected Fergusson. "Bob Fergusson!" he exclaimed, "that I do! Many a time I've put him to the door. Ah! he was a tricky callant;" but he added, "a fine laddie for a' that."

He seemed to have great pleasure in the recollection of so lively and amiable a boy.[1]

While at college, the young poet was wont to put in practice, Mr Chambers relates, "a frolic which marks the singular vivacity of his character. Whenever he received a remittance from his friends at Edinburgh, he hung out the money in a little bag attached by a string to the end of a pole fixed in his window, and there he would let it dangle for a whole day in the wind. He is supposed to have done this partly from puerile exultation in the possession of his wealth [!] and partly by way of making a bravado in the eyes of his companions; among whom, no doubt, the slenderness of their funds, and the failure of supplies, would be frequent subjects of raillery."[2] His talents of mimicry, too, were great, an illustration of which the late lamented Professor Tennant communicated to the "Edinburgh Literary Journal," [No. 164] which he received from the Rev. James Brown, D.D., the poet's fellow-student at St. Andrews, and who, from kindred delights and sympathies, delighted to tell that "he had enjoyed much of Fergusson's society."[3] This anecdote has been reprinted by Mr. Chambers; but I prefer giving it in the more characteristic and equally truthful version of John Mackay Wilson, Esq., in his "Recollections of Fergusson."[4] The scene is the porter-lodge of the university,

1 Chambers, in loc., and Inverarity MSS. 2 *Ibid.*

3 Copied out for me by Professor Tennant. Letter accompanying.

4 Wilson's 'Tales of the Borders,' No. 115. These 'Recollections' are truly interesting and touching; and were the result of various communications made to Mr. Wilson, whose pains-taking researches I have had frequent occasion to verify in the course of my own.

kept by the facetious John Hogg, whom the poet subsequently lamented in a right merry elegy on his death.[1]

"Various students are in the lodge. John *loquitur*.

"There's Rob Fergusson beside you,"—"Setting out for the kirk," said the young poet, interrupting him, "an' yet drinkin' ale on Saturday at e'en, wi' old John Hogg." "Weel, weel, laddie, it's easier for the best o' us to find fault wi' ithers, than to mend oursels. Ye hae the head, onyhow; but Jamie Brown[2] tells me it's a doctor ye're gaun to be after a'." "Nonsense, John Hogg,—I wonder how a man o' your standing,"—"Nonsense, I grant you," said one of the students; "but true enough for a' that, Bob. You see, John, Bob an' I were at the King's Muirs last Saturday, and ca'd at the pendicle [a small farm-house on the King's Muirs of Denino] in the passing for a cup o' whey; when the guidwife tell't us there was ane o' the callants, who had broken into the milk-house twa nichts afore, lyin' ill o' a surfeit. 'Dangerous case,' said Rob; 'but let me see him; I have studied to small purpose, if I know nothing o' medicine, my good woman.' Weel, the woman was just glad enough to bring him to the bedside, an' no wonder—ye never saw a wiser phiz in your lives; Dr. Dumpie's was naething till't; and after he had sucked the head o' his stick for ten minutes, an' fand the loon's pulse, an' asked mair questions than the guidwife liked to answer, he prescribed. But losh! sic a prescription! a day's fasting an' twa ladles o' nettle kail was the gist o't; but then

1 Concerning 'honest John' and his 'winsome' better half, I have been enabled to recover various memorabilia. See Poem, p. 107.

2 *Ante.* Dr. Brown, who was for thirty years rector of a considerable parish in the neighbourhood of London, was the author of a poem called 'Britain Preserved,' written about 1793, in reference to, and commendation of, Mr. Pitt's plan of policy then adopted. Note by Professor Tennant. [This poem has long ago been consigned "to the tomb of all the Capulets."]

there went mair Latin to the tail o' that, than our neebor the Doctor ever had to lose."

The impulse of the moment appears to have been at all times irresistible with Fergusson; and, accordingly, he allowed himself to be carried away by it in circumstances where, with any regard to consequences, levity would have been repressed.

It is related that his voice being excellent,[1] he was required, oftener than was at all agreeable to him, to officiate as 'precentor' in the chapel.

His 'wicked wit,' says Mr. Chambers, (taking the fact from Campbell,) suggested a method of getting rid of the distasteful employment, which he did not scruple to put in practice, though there was great danger that it would incense the heads of the College against him.[2] It is customary in Scotland for persons who are in a 'dangerous state of illness,' or who are by other 'necessary causes' detained from public worship, to give in a *line*, requesting the prayers of their congregation, which the precentor reads aloud, immediately before the prayer. Fergusson availing himself of this custom, rose up in the desk, and with the usual nasal solemnity of tone pronounced, as if read from a paper, "Remember in prayer, a young man (then present), of whom, from the sudden effects of inebriety, there appears but small hope of recovery."[3] A proceeding so utterly indecorous, albeit it is not stated to have occurred on the Lord's Day, could not but be frowned upon by the Professors, not more in itself, than from the incontrollable titter and mirth which it produced among the students, and eke, (for they were no

1 Mr. Buddo of St. Andrews wrote me recently that Mr. David Scott, beadle, has heard his mother say that Fergusson, whom she knew, was a 'beautiful singer:' and that his voice was heard above all others in the College Kirk.

2 Chambers. Life in loc.

3 Campbell, Chambers, Inverarity MSS., Ruddiman. Life MS.

Agelasti,) it may be supposed, on more than one professorial visage, on the occasion.

Fergusson was reprimanded: and (what he wished) relieved of his precentorship. Another incident however very speedily occurred which it was still less in the power of the Professors to overlook: and which ended in Fergusson's temporary extrusion (not expulsion) from the College. The circumstances attending this extrusion from the University have occasioned some controversy. The incident was first taken down from 'Scandal's unforgiving lips,' by Dr. Irving for the third edition (1801) of his Life of the Poet, towards which his "vigorous faculties"[1] and "endeavours"[2] appear to have been directed, to the sole end of swelling out the slender pamphlet of 1799 into a volume. While the new Life was passing through the press Professor Playfair, who was a fellow-student of Fergusson's, and alive to the fair fame of his early friend, corrected the precipitate and over-curious statement, which the biographer duly acknowledged in a postscript.

Entirely coinciding with the author's own estimate of his own production I cannot withhold the 'peccavi:' "Notwithstanding my severity in criticizing the compositions of others, my own stand in need of every possible indulgence."[3] They do. Dr. Irving's account is as follows, "What amused himself, tended to disturb the quiet of others. His misdemeanours were either so frequent, or of such a kind, that after a residence of four years, he exposed himself to the disgrace of a formal expulsion from the University. The eloquence of Dr. Wilkie was powerfully exerted in his behalf, but without producing the desired effect; the other members of the

1 The author's own words, p. 1. 2 Ibid. p. 1.
3 Postscript, p. 129. Three Lives, 1801.

Senatus Academicus were by no means disposed to listen to his arguments; and the imprudent youth was accordingly dismissed."[1]

Such an unqualified statement naturally aggrieved, as well the admirers as the relatives of Fergusson. Mr. Inverarity, nephew of the poet, applied to Professor Vilant of St. Andrews for an explanation. At the Professor's request Dr. Hill drew up a formal 'document:' and Mr. Vilant, who cherished, together with Dr. Hill, the kindliest recollections of Fergusson, attested it.

The 'document' was published by Mr. Inverarity in a spirited Critique on Dr. Irving's 'Life of Fergusson:' and has been reprinted by Peterkin and Chambers.[2] I shall allow it therefore to escape in my Appendix.[3] By the twofold kindness of the venerable Principal Lee and Mr. David Laing of the Signet Library, I am enabled to displace and correct the statement from memory, thirty-four years subsequent, of Professor Vilant. The following is the register of the incident in the MS. private Journal of Professor and Principal Thomas Tullidelph of St. Andrews, which was kept regularly day after day from the year 1734 to 1774.

"26*th March*, 1768.

"I extruded Alexander Grant *sine spe redeundi* [without hope of return], on account of a continued course of irregularity for some weeks past, particularly for a riot committed with some accomplices on Lewis Grant about one o'clock of the morning of this 26th of March, and also extruded Ro^{t}. Fergusson and Charles Stewart his accomplices in that riot. Ro^{t}. Fergusson likewise had wantonly given up John Adamson's name to be prayed for.

"I deprived John Adamson of his Server's place for

1 Life, p. 9. 2 Peterkin, Life, p. 19 sq. Chambers, Life, p. 300.
3 Appendix E.

being out twice all night, and for imposing on the Hebdomadar by a false pretext to get to the dancing school another night.

"*N. B.*—30*th March* 1768. Rot. Fergusson and Charles Stewart were received in again at a meeting of the Masters."

On the whole, says Mr. Chambers, in his own generous way in striking contrast to the inconsiderate remarks of Dr. Irving, "this transaction affords a proof that Fergusson, whatever might be his indiscretions, had not, by refractory or disrespectful conduct, rendered himself obnoxious to the heads of the University, since, had that been the case, it is to be presumed, they would have availed themselves of this infraction of academical discipline to make good his expulsion. If therefore, the first aspirations of his muse were employed in satirical effusions against his instructors, it must have been with an absence of all bitterness, and in a vein of pleasantry which was not meant to be, and did not prove offensive."[1] The punishments of the others, Principal Lee observes to the Editor, were not remitted, "so that poor Fergusson's case appears not to have been aggravated;" and again, "I have palliated R. F.'s offence by showing that it had not appeared in the same aggravated light in the eyes of the College, as many other cases which had been of frequent occurrence previously, year after year."[2]

This 'youthful fray,' remarks a tasteful and discriminating biographer of Fergusson, "has been represented in various lights, and magnified into a matter of serious accusation: but it surely can reflect no discredit on the memory of Fergusson. Every one who has been educated at a public school must have observed, upon occa-

1 Life, p. 360. 2 Principal Lee, Letters.

sions where all the boys have rendered themselves obnoxious to punishment, and where of course to punish them all would be no easy task, that those boys are selected as leaders who seem to possess the greatest degree of spirit, whether they have been more guilty than their fellows or not; and the only apology which can be made for such a discrimination is, that such boys might have been the leaders, and probably were the inciters of the disturbance."[1]

Let us "hear the conclusion of the whole matter" in the words of Robert Burns.

> "The cleanest corn that e'er was dight
> May hae some piles o' caff in,
> Sae ne'er a fellow-mortal slight
> For *random fits* o' daffin'."

During the entire period of his attendance at the University, while, in the words of Dr. Irving, who will not be suspected of partiality, "he performed with a sufficient share of applause the various exercises which the rules of the College prescribed,"[2] he held not infrequent intercourse with the "nine faire ladyes that dwelle on y fork'd hille:" nor is it without regret that we find that with the single exception of the 'Elegy on the Death of Gregory,' all these occasional pieces have perished.

He was not without a counsellor in his poetic "studies." In a letter from his brother Henry,[3] we find the following.

"I read with attention the Burial-Letter you versified and your poetical Letter to the Cripple Laureat [Query

1 Life prefixed to Poems, 1 Vol. 12mo., Edinburgh 1805. W. & J. Deas.
2 Life, p. 8, 1801, &c.
3 Inverarity MSS. The date, as mentioned by Dr. Irving, is torn away, but from the subsequent notice of the 'New Theatre's going briskly forward,' the foundation-stone of which was laid on the 16th of March 1768, it must have been written in 1768.

—Claudero alias 'cripple' James Wilson]: the former I approve of; but cannot recommend ye latter in point of rhyme. You'll please notice that the first and fifth, and the second and fourth lines in compositions of the like kind, such as Habbie Simson, &c., chime with one another."

He was not without some plans of 'imping his wing' for more serious 'flights.' Dr. Irving has preserved as an object of curiosity the following dramatic "fragment," which he informs us he transcribed from the "blank leaves" of Anderson's "Defence of the Presbyterians," in which, somewhat incongruously our poet had inserted it :[1]—

> Therefore 'tis meet that Sisera be crown'd
> With all the honour worthy of his service,
> And that this day for mirth be set apart,
> To celebrate the deeds, and valiant acts
> Display'd by him in war—
>
> Conquest alone, my liege, repays our toil:
> But since it is your sovereign inclination
> This day to grace us with a pompous triumph,
> As swift as thought my deeds shall fly to serve
> In all your after battles—

These verses have been pronounced "puerile:" nor would we dissent. Another dramatic scheme assumed a more decided "form and pressure." He had, it is stated,[2] finished two acts of a Tragedy founded on the "achievements and fate" of Wallace: but having seen another play on the same subject, he abandoned the undertaking, being afraid that his own might be considered a plagiarism.

1 Life, 1799, p. 9-10; 1801, p. 7-8.

2 Supplement to Encyclop. Britannica. Life of Fergusson in loc.; and Irving, p. 6, 1801, &c.

There is no Play in print antecedent to Fergusson, so far as we can learn, on the story of Wallace: and as for the anticipated charge of plagiarism the reason is inconsequent.[1] We suspect that it was rather the criticism of his Professor-friend Wilkie which weighed with him in this suppression: and certainly it is well that it did, for his abilities were not at all equal to the task of filling up the conception of the great patriot-hero which burdens the Scottish imagination from earliest memories. His Muse was rather one of the fair maidens that visit the sunny pool on the green-hill side where the water-lilies float like fairy skiffs, and the dewy wildflowers droop over the calm clear mirror of a single star, than one "who in gorgeous pall comes sweeping by," stirring the heart to its very depths, and shadowing it as with a thunder-cloud. Wallace and Bannockburn and Mary still await some future Shakspeare or Otway.

We have no positive means of knowing the acquirements of Fergusson under his respective Professors: but that notwithstanding his volatile and festive disposition, they were not inconsiderable, we are warranted, from Dr. Irving's testimony, to suppose. That he was a respectable classical scholar appears from an anecdote which I took down from the lips of my late venerable friend, Miss Ruddiman, who cherished a vivid remembrance of our poet, whom she again and again named "a dear, modest, gentle creature."

Miss Ruddiman informed me that Mr. Arthur Mason, editor of the well-known School-Collection, was one of the favourite guests at her brother's literary parties. If

1 In Ruddiman's Magazine, vol. xlix. p 147, 1780, there is a Prologue to the Tragedy of Sir William Wallace; written and spoken by Mr. Jackson. The Tragedy itself was likewise the production of Mr. Jackson: but it was never printed. Baker's Biographia Dramatica, in loc.

previous to such occasions he met with any classical difficulty, he was accustomed to consult Fergusson, especially if the Rev. Mr. Greenlaw was expected to be present. With this facetious scholar Mr. Mason, on the strength of very recently acquired enlightenment on particular *quæstiones vexatæ* duly introduced, had frequent encounters: nor did Fergusson fail to assist the weaker vessel. He usually carried about with him a pocket edition of Homer and the Æneid of Virgil: and when, as was frequently the case, Mr. Mason was being pushed to the wall by his wily antagonist, our poet would casually introduce another knot on which he foreknew Mr. Greenlaw entertained strong opinions, when the brunt of the word-battle was borne by the youthful knight. Mr. Mason and Mr. Greenlaw greatly esteemed Fergusson. Miss Ruddiman vividly recalled a particular tea-party at which both were present, as well as the poet, Mr. Woods, Mr. Wilson, and others, when Fergusson and Mr. Greenlaw had a severe tussle. Mr. Greenlaw was obliged to yield the point (which Miss Ruddiman vainly endeavoured to recall), and in doing so said emphatically, "That young man is a burning, God grant that he may be a shining light. The more's the pity for us that no one takes him by the hand."

Besides his classical attainments, "he was a considerable proficient in Mathematics."[1]

In Natural Philosophy it is to be presumed that he must have distinguished himself: for Professor Wilkie manifested a particular regard for him. It was on finishing his studies under Wilkie that his Bursary-course was concluded.

1 Ruddiman MS. Life. In a shorter Sketch by Mr. Ruddiman, he says "it is somewhat extraordinary that the Mathematics were, when at the University, his favourite study."

2 That is, of four Sessions 1765, 1766, 1767, 1768, agreeably to the

At the close of Session 1767-8, he left St. Andrews,[1] and like Cowper on leaving Olney, he inscribed his name behind the window shutter of a small back room in the College.[2]

He returned to his 'widowed mother in Edinburgh.'[3]

Deed of Mortification. "How soon and whensoever the saids children or either of them shall attain to the s[ai]d age of fourteen years compleat, then I appoint and ordain the s[ai]d patrons and administrators to make tryal if they or either of them be capable of learning, and has ane inclination to be scholars, and when it is found that the saids children or either of them are so capable and inclined to be Scholars—It is my will and I appoint them to be put to St. Leonards Colledge of St. Andrews for the space of four years, and that the saids patrons and administrators entertain, maintain and furnish them at bed, board and with cloaths and other necessary's, so far as the s[ai]d rent will extend, &c. &c. See p. xli.

1 The following is the entry in the Sederunt-Books of the Trust.

> Sederunt of George Maxwell, Esq., Provost of Dundee, and James Graham, Esq., of Metthie, two of the Patrons att Dundee, this ninth day of December seventeen hundred and sixty-eight years,

The said James Graham represented that both places in the Mortification were become vacant by the death of Thomas Thomson, son of Thomas Thomson, Wright, upon the twentyeth of August last, and by Robert Fergusson, son of William Fergusson, Writer in Edinburgh, his leaving the Colledge at the first of November last, and petitions having been presented on behalf of, &c. &c.

2 I discovered when at College in 1801, 'Robert Fergusson's name' written with pencil in one of the small back rooms of the Old College-Building, now in course of being demolished that it may give place to a more elegant and convenient edifice. Professor Tennant to Editor. Devongrove, 17th Sept. 1846.

3 Ruddiman MS. Life.

CHAPTER IV.

1768—1769.

Return to Edinburgh—His Father's Death—Close of Bursar-course—Divinity abandoned — Prospects — Teacher — Medicine — Visit to Aberdeenshire—Dr. Irving—Refutation—Anecdote.

I HAVE stated that Fergusson returned to Edinburgh to his 'widowed mother.' His father had died in 1767.[1] His mother was now earning a scanty livelihood by 'taking in lodgers' into her 'spare room' in her lowly residence in Jamieson's Land. Shortly before our poet's return his brother Henry had gone to sea.[2]

While his revered father lived, Fergusson proceeded from class to class and from school to College, fully occupied, at the time, with each particular study, but still looking forward, as an ultimate object, to the Church. When however in Session 1766-1767 tidings came, first of his father's illness, and next of his death, all his prospects were overclouded. He knew that he had only one other Bursar-Session, and that, for the Church a period of study equal to what had elapsed was imperative, and where was he to look for a patron? His father would gladly have *scrimpit* himself to have advanced his Robert: but his premature grey hairs were underneath the earth, and he could not think of making his mother's "little less" by pursuing his Theological Course. In 1767 consequently, almost immediately on the death of

1 Ruddiman MS. Life, ante. Letter of Walter Fergusson, Esq., W. S., to Mr. Ruddiman.

2 See Appendix A.

his father he 'gave up all thoughts of the ministry.'[1] It was only in deference to his father's wishes that he had stifled his own disinclinations: and it was therefore merely to finish his "education and mantinnance" that he returned to College in Session 1767-68. Very possibly the dramatic attempts which we have had occasion to notice, were surrounded with all those "golden dreams," which at the very same juncture were burdening the eye of the "wondrous boy" Chatterton. It must have been sorrowfully, not "gladly," that Fergusson returned to Edinburgh: and certainly Dr. Irving's remarks are reprehensible. Our poet did not seek to hide his disinclination towards studying with a view to the Church: but his reasons were very different from those which his biographer has gratuitously supposed. "It may readily be conceived," Dr. Irving says, "that to Fergusson the duties of a clergyman presented few allurements." And indeed, he continues with mingled levity and impertinence, "to a man of delicate sensibility, the situation of a parochial minister can never be supposed to open a very inviting prospect: he is perpetually exposed to the anathemas of those who, on every occasion, stand prepared to wrest the vindictive thunder from the hands of Omnipotence."[2] When Fergusson closed the Session of 1767-68 at St. Andrews, he was altogether 'unfitted with an aim.' His prospects were unsettled and gloomy. His plans "never took any decided form for his settlement in life."[3]

The profession of a teacher might have been resorted to, as it had, and has been, by many in similar circumstances; but for the gin-horse, plodding duties of a

1 Ruddiman MS. Life, ante.
2 Irving, Life of Fergusson, 1799, p. 10; 1801, p. 9.
3 Chambers in loc.

schoolmaster, Fergusson's ardent temperament singularly disqualified him; and probably he never thought of the alternative.

The study of medicine was suggested to him, but that similarly involved, with the church, farther college preparations; but aside from this, it was no less distasteful, for "to such vivid nervous excitement was he liable, that he could not read the description of a disease, without imagining that his own finely-strung frame felt its symptoms,"[1] a complaint, it is recorded, which John Bois made in a like case, and one with which the writer feels it not difficult to sympathise.

After some time spent in vain hope that some opening would present itself, he paid a visit to his relatives in Aberdeenshire, with whom, during a previous vacation, he had spent several weeks.

I shall give the narrative from Dr. Irving, as I am once more called upon to point out errors of fact and inference in his statements. "He had a maternal uncle living near Aberdeen, a Mr. John Forbes, who was in pretty affluent circumstances. To him Fergusson paid a visit, in hopes of procuring some suitable employment through his influence. Mr. Forbes at first treated him with civility; but, instead of exerting himself to promote his interests, suffered him to remain six months in his house, and afterwards dismissed him in a manner which reflects very little honour on his memory. His clothes were beginning to assume a thread-bare appearance; and on this account, he was deemed an improper guest for his uncle's house. Filled with indignation at the unworthy treatment which he had received, he retired to a little solitary inn that stood at a small distance; and having procured pen, ink, and paper, wrote a letter to

1 Irving, Life, p. 10., &c. Chambers in loc.

his unfeeling relation, couched in terms of manly resentment. After his departure, Mr. Forbes seems to have relented; he despatched a messenger to him with a few shillings, to bear his expenses on the road. This paltry present, the lowness of his funds compelled him to accept. He set out for Edinburgh on foot, and with much difficulty reached his mother's house. The fatigues of the journey, added to the depression of his mind, produced such an effect upon his delicate constitution, that for several days he was afflicted with a severe illness. When he began to recover strength he endeavoured to console his grief by composing a poem on the decay of friendship, and another against repining at fortune."[1]

This narrative has been repeated by every subsequent biographer, varied only, as the writer was phlegmatic or sanguine, in the extent and ardour of vituperation against the so-called "unnatural uncle."[2] Here, at least, our biographical Herods and Pilates have united in sympathy towards the poet. I shall not, it is believed, be thought to have any wish to withdraw anything favourable to Fergusson; nor shall I be suspected of even the most distant desire to vindicate the uncle at the expense of the nephew.

It is with becoming confidence, therefore, that I proceed to correct and explain Dr. Irving's, to say the least, unwary and precipitate charges against a gentleman "who was then in his grave,"[3] and whom, confessedly, he only knew as "*a* Mr. John Forbes." The whole statement is an extravagant rendering of a very trifling incident. Dr. Irving unluckily, I here publicly state, could not

1 Irving, Life, 1799, pp. 11, 12; 1801, pp. 10, 11.

2 I should except Mr. Chambers, who inserts the incident, but not without a caveat. I transfer Mr. Chambers's observations to the Appendix F, with one or two intercalary corrections.

3 See Appendix G.

recall to me his "authority." That it was not communicated by any member of the family is apparent, from its not having been even alluded to by Alexander Campbell, who obtained his materials principally from Mrs. Inverarity, and who published his full life of Fergusson in 1798, only a year before Dr. Irving's; nor is there the most distant allusion to it in any of the three MS. Lives of Fergusson by Mr. Ruddiman. This want of 'authority' was to me a 'stumbling-block' on the very threshold; nor did I, nor can I relieve Dr. Irving of the suspicion of exaggeration, if not of calumny. The circumstances are these; and I am indebted to John Forbes, Esq., writer, Old Meldrum, grandson of the poet's uncle, for the substance matter of my account. The various 'particulars,' together with the anecdote which succeeds, were taken down from the lips of his father, who was a "courter of the nine" himself, and who cherished a vivid and affectionate remembrance of his cousin.[1] The present Mr. Forbes' father derived his account from his father, who was the uncle of Fergusson.

Mr. Fergusson, senior, had, through the interest of Lord Finlater,[2] then Chancellor of Scotland, and a patron of his, procured for Robert his bursary at Dundee and St. Andrews. After passing through the curriculum of four years, the poet was invited to his uncle's residence at Round Lichnot, and accordingly he went thither early in 1769.

The Earl [Finlater] having occasion to travel north to Mr. Forbes' residence, wrote to him that he intended to pass his house on a given day, and that he should dine with him.

Mr. Forbes, in consequence, invited Keith Urquhart,

1 See Appendix H.

2 Fergusson's uncle had been factor to Lord Finlater before his Lordship recommended him to Keith Urquhart, Esq.,

Esq., of Meldrum, his nearest employer, to meet his Lordship; and on the day appointed, he instructed Fergusson to dress himself, and to be in waiting to come into the dining-room, along with his own sons, one of whom was the father of the present Mr. Forbes, and my narrator, when he should send for them after dinner, as he was very desirous to introduce his nephew to his guests, who might, from their high station and influence, materially forward his future prospects. Fergusson timeously appeared in his "best suit;" but finding the intervening hours hang heavily on his hands, he proceeded to the Wood of Lichnot at about a quarter of a mile's distance, and there consumed the time in climbing trees and swinging on the branches. He returned in the nick of time to answer the summons to the dining-room, but without having had leisure either to brush the 'green' and soil from his clothes, or to get some unseemly 'rents' repaired. Seeing him appear in such a sorry plight, Mr. Forbes was greatly irritated, and from his disreputable appearance, to a certain extent lost his 'temper,' and sharply ordered Fergusson out of the room. On the party rising from table some hours afterwards, it was found that the poet had disappeared. On inquiry being made, a servant remembered seeing him, 'with a bundle under his arm,' on the road which led to Aberdeen. His uncle at once surmising, from his peculiarly sensitive nature, that he had "left," despatched a messenger on horseback after him, to 'entreat his return;' or, at all events, his acceptance of the means to carry him comfortably to Edinburgh, which he sent with the servant. The messenger overtook him, a dozen of miles or so, on his journey; but he peremptorily declined coming back; nor would he accept the proffered supplies. Such is the source of the painfully exaggerated and authorityless statement of Dr. Irving; on the one hand,

a sharp word, spoken in a moment of not unjustifiable irritation; on the other, a delicately sensitive, proud, inexperienced mind, fretting under that word, as under a spark of fire. For what remains of error, if not worse, Dr. Irving's own narrative furnishes an autochthanal refutation. A letter is stated to have been written by the poet to his uncle, from a "small inn in the immediate vicinity" of the house. No such inn ever existed, "solitary," or otherwise, within miles of Round Lichnot, and no letter ever was received by Mr. Forbes.

The poems on the 'Decay of Friendship,' and 'Against repining at Fortune,' are stated to have been composed "when he began to recover strength, as a consolation for his grief."[1] This assertion fully sustains Dr. Irving's own charge against himself, of "precipitance and ignorance."[2] The applicability of the titles is the only authority for the statement. Fergusson's visit to Aberdeenshire was made in 1769, when he was entering on his nineteenth year; but, as Dr. Irving ought to have known, the 'Decay of Friendship' did not appear until September 1772; and the lines 'Against repining at Fortune,' not until 24th September of the same year.

Besides, in neither of these poems is there anything which can be referred to the conduct of his uncle, which would, doubtless, have been the case, had they been composed in the first warmth of his resentment. I refer my readers to those two poems,[3] and may inform them, that instead of being housed "in grand halls, with all the glories of the pencil hung," Mr. Forbes was, at the period of the poet's visit, during the erection, which was then in progress, of his future permanent residence of Forresterhill, temporarily located in a farm-house of one storey [flat] and surrounded with no appliances which

1 *Ante*, p. lxvii. 2 *Ante*, p. lvi. 3 See pp. 184 and 210.

could have suggested, even to a poetic fancy, the imaginary pictures of wealth and luxury depicted in the lines on the 'Decay of Friendship.' But perhaps the most satisfactory evidence yet remains to be told. As a proof that the mother of the poet entertained no ill feeling against her brother for the [apocryphal] ungenerous treatment of her son, it may be mentioned, that after his death, she was accustomed to visit the north, when she invariably resided with her brother at Forresterhill.[1]

Moreover, it is proper to bear in mind, the friendly 'correspondence' between Mr. Forbes and the father of our poet, which is exhibited in the preceding portion of the present memoir.

Mr. Forbes of Oldmeldrum has supplied me with an anecdote of Fergusson, while at Round Lichnot, on the authority of his grandfather. He was accustomed to assemble the servants who had been detained from public worship on the Sabbaths; and taking his stand at the mouth of the peat-stack, he would address them for more than an hour at a time, in language so eloquent and fervid, that Mr. Forbes distinctly remembered to have often seen them bathed in tears.

1 Communicated by Mr. Forbes, Writer, Oldmeldrum.

CHAPTER V.

1769—1773.

Enters Commissary-clerk's Office—Abercromby—Note-book—Extracts—The Law—Remark—Refutation—Woods—Tenducci—Songs in Artaxerxes—Contributes to the 'Weekly Magazine or Edinburgh Amusement'—English—Scottish—Immediate Applause—Mayne—J. S.—Guion—Campbell—Character—Friendships—Dunbar—Lorimer—Sawers—Convivalia—Cape Club—Anecdote—Volume 1773—Subscription—Particulars.

Fergusson, having thus abruptly foreclosed his expectations from Mr. Forbes, found himself once more in the capital with his 'widowed' mother, the poorest of the poor. He was now advancing to manhood, and it became sternly and imperatively necessary that he should apply himself to some profession by which he might earn an immediate subsistence. He was recommended to Mr. Charles Abercromby, then Commissary-clerk, who took him into his office as an extracting clerk, for which his dexterity and skill in penmanship sufficiently qualified him. This situation was miserably inferior to his talents and acquirements, but his straitened circumstances—his utter want—compelled him to accept it. With the exception of a few months devoted to similar duties at the Sheriff-clerk's office, where he only remained two or three months, from the painful nature of the Sheriff's duties as an enforcer of executions, he spent in this lowly, machine-like employment, the remainder of his too, too brief and ill-fated life.

His first service was to write out the register of the Commissary-clerk, for which he received only a trifle per page.[1] Mr. Abercromby, too, occasionally employed him

1 Sommers.

privately; and he was accustomed to write letters, copy out law papers, &c., &c. to any who might make application.

The following extracts from memoranda which the poet has entered in the blank leaves of the original MS. of the 'Book of Rates,' by his father, sufficiently indicate the nature of his employments, and his pitiably meagre recompense.

He entitles these 'Memoranda.'

I. Record.

Decreet of divorce, Pirie g. Backie, 30, .	£0	3	1½
Decreet adherence, Galloway g. Laidlas, 24,	0	2	6
Decreet divorce, Rt. Keil g. White, 12, .	0	1	3
Divorce, Paterson g. Ramsay, 9, . .	0	0	11¼
Divorce, Chalmers against Marr, 50, .	0	5	2½
Edinburgh, October 11th, 1770,	£0	13	0
Decreet, divorce, Thomson g. Lawrie, 22,	0	2	7½
	£0	15	7½

II. Cash Account.

For writing depositions, ...	£0	2	0
For do., ...	0	1	0
For registering protests, ...	0	0	6½
For writing an infeftement, . . .	0	2	6
For an eik, ...	0	1	0
For writing answer to the petition, James Sim, ...	0	0	6
Edinburgh, 11th October 1770	£0	7	6½

For a testament, umql. Daniel M'Don., .	0	0	9
For a testament, umql. Adam Edmond, .	0	1	6

III.

For a testament, umq^{l}. James Veitch, .	£0	2	0
For transcribing an account, . . .	0	0	6
	£0	4	9
	0	7	8½
Amount of Cash, 18th October, 1770, .	£0	12	5½
Received for the Record, ...	0	13	0
	1	5	5½
	0	8	6
	£1	13	11½

IV.

For writing Brodie's inventory, 1s.
For a sheet of stamp paper, 1s. in part.
For do., 1s.
For writing Euphemia Dalrymple's testament, 1s. 6d.

V. Testaments.

Testament testamentar, umq^{l}. Alexander Veitch, 14.
Testament testamentar, umq^{l}. Adam Edmond, 10, P^{d}.
Testament dative, umq^{l}. Daniel M'Donald, 6, P^{d}.
Testament dative, umq^{l}. Lilias Weir, 5, P^{d}.
Testament dative, umq^{l}. Alexander Veitch, 16s. P^{d}.

VI.

Testament dative, umq^{l}. Euphemia Dalrymple.
Test^{t}. dative, Margar. Duncan, 14.
Test^{t}. dative, Captain Waulker, 6.
Test^{t}. dative, John Mowatt, 27.
Test^{t}. testamentar, Agnes Brash, 12.
Test^{t}. testamentar, Skirving, 13.
Test^{t}. test^{t}. Marion Hogg, 10.
Test^{t}. dative, James Cairnes—

Interspersed are holograph German 'Capitals,' and other ornamental letters, apparently designed for use in these 'Testament datives,' &c., &c.

It has been stated,[1] that Fergusson "attempted the study of the law, a study pronounced the most improper for him, and in which he made little or no progress." The reason assigned is, "a genius so lively could not submit to the drudgery of that dry and sedentary profession."[2] Dr. Irving, and the writer in the Encyclopædia follow up these early observations by learned 'references,' *pro* and *con*. They might have been spared. His only study of law was the 'copying of law-papers for bread;' and as to the remark of the first editor of his poems, echoed by subsequent biographers, it is a false and unfeeling supposition to imagine that Fergusson, who could bend himself to the drudgery which the preceding extracts indicate, could not have mustered resolution enough to submit to the mental labour of studying any science which would have conducted him to an honourable independence.[3]

I cannot find terms sufficiently strong to reprobate the "pointing of a moral," in an early edition of the Encyclopædia Britannica, which says,[4] "Mr. Fergusson, with many estimable qualities, was so utterly destitute of mental vigour, that, rather than submit to what his friends call drudgery, he seemed to have looked with a wistful eye to some sinecure place."

"Seemed!" I wish I knew the name of the writer of this sentence, that I might brand him as a pitiless scribbler. "Not submit to drudgery!" Why, the study of the law, had it even been as dry as the withered heart that could dictate such a calumny, would have been absolutely a daily delight of the highest kind, compared to the monotonous duties of perpetual transcription.[5]

1 Ruddiman, Memoir prefixed to Part ii. of Poems, 1779, seq.
2 *Ibid.*
3 Lives of Scottish Poets, Fergusson, in loc. Vol. ii., p. 65.
4 3d edition, in loc.
5 See Chambers's Life of Fergusson, in loc.

The poor, down-crushed lad was moiling and toiling night and day, at a penny per page, and never had either the opportunity or the means of following the law as a profession.

Go,—moralist, light of heart and jovial in intercourse, living at ease, quiet and happy, writing as a recreation in thy study, surrounded with all the delicacies, and comforts, and securities of life, on thy gilt-edged, prim-folded sheet,—shut up the kingly eagle in the stancheoned cage of thy court-yard, and bid him 'fly,' *because* his native hills are before him.

The roar of the mountain-torrent may come hoarsely down on the storm-wind as of old from his eerie-crag; and the dilated eye, and the raised, half-cut wing, and the griping talon, and the thrilling breast dabbling the bars with blood, tell of the sunward instinct.

But there—bid him 'fly.' Oh! the mockery. Fergusson was glad to commence copying law papers for his daily bread; and truly, observes one of his biographers, "like others, whom accident has thrown into a course of life contrary to their inclination, was prevented by the pressure of daily necessity, from adventuring on a better."[1]

> "Alone, the oar he plied, the rapids nigh;
> To pause but for a moment was to die."

Some friendly hand might have interposed its aid, to give a happier direction to his fortunes; but none such was ever held forth. Let it not, therefore, be imputed to Fergusson as a fault, that he but yielded to a tide of events which he could not control.

Soon after his return from Aberdeenshire, and when he was just commencing his copying drudgery, he had "formed an acquaintance with several players and musi-

1 Lives of Scottish Poets, Fergusson in loc. Vol. ii., p. 65.

cians;" and their society naturally made him kick the more against that uncongenial employment, which demanded unceasing attendance for the very barest subsistence.

The early fruit of this intercourse appeared in a life-long friendship with Mr. Woods, the favourite actor of the Edinburgh boards: and in three Songs which he supplied in 1769 to Tenducci for the opera of 'Artaxerxes,' which was in that year produced with many attractions in the Theatre Royal of Edinburgh.

These three Songs, which were set to three favourite Scots airs, in singing which Tenducci excelled, I have preserved among his English poems, as the earliest published productions of his Muse.

Fergusson continued chained to the oar up to 1771. The preceding extracts from his note-book have revealed the nature of his piteous employment to nearly the close of 1770.

Mr. Abercromby, his employer in the Commissary Office, was a worthy, precise, leal-hearted, fidgetty, fretful, per-nickety old gentleman: remarkable for hard-working assiduity in his profession: loveable for his patient, father-like "challenges and advices,"[1] which he gave the mercurial poet: and to be remembered in that he was not a-wanting "in the evil day."[2]

The life of Fergusson had apparently reached its nadir-

1 Ruddiman MS. Life.

2 The father of Mr. Abercromby was Episcopal clergyman at Tarland, Aberdeenshire, to which place both the father and mother of our poet belonged: and it was from this circumstance that Mr. Abercromby received Fergusson so readily into the Office of the Commissary-Clerk, in which he was Depute-Clerk. Besides this situation, Mr. Abercromby practised as a W. S., in partnership with a Mr. Fraser, and our poet was occasionally employed by them. Mr. Abercromby died in 1773.—*Communicated by Dr. John Taylor, Surgeon, 8 Abercromby Place, Edinburgh*, a relative by marriage.

point in 1771, when a new light seemed to break upon him.

While at College he had flung off a few Macaronic verses, and like Chatterton playful satires against the Masters, and whimsical 'Elegies on learned, defunct Professors,' all of which were dispersed as were of old the Sybil-leaves.

But in 1771 he discovered the lode of the "pure gold of poetry" that was within him: and for the four short years that succeeded and rounded his life, it was poured forth with all the careless affluence of Californian nature.

Throughout the year 1771[1] he had contributed various occasional English poems to the "Weekly Magazine or Edinburgh Amusement," a popular and able periodical which had been commenced by the brothers Ruddiman in 1768.[2]

His first pieces were the Pastorals, "Morning, Noon, and Night,"[3] which were published anonymously with the following note prefixed.

"We have been favoured with three Pastorals, under the titles of Morning, Noon, and Night, written by a young gentleman of this place, the stile of which appears as natural and picturesque as that of any of the modern ones hitherto published."

This injudicious praise—for although the Pastorals are certainly "as natural and picturesque as that of any of

1 Dr. Irving states, that "before he reached the twentieth year of his age, many of his little poems had made their appearance in Ruddiman's Weekly Magazine." But this is a mistake. The Magazine only commenced in July 1768 when Fergusson was in his eighteenth year: and in the first ten volumes 1768—1770 there is not an acknowledged line from his pen

2 The 'Weekly Magazine or Edinburgh Amusement,' was commenced, as stated in the text, in 1768, and with the exception of an interregnum of nearly a year in 1782-3, extended to 1784, and forms in all 60 volumes. Each 'Weekly Number' was 1½d, and it numbered among its contributors all the eminent writers of the day. See Appendix I.

3 See Poems, pp. 160—171.

the modern ones," yet are they but sorry affairs—led Fergusson to pursue his English vein, and had he continued to do so only, he should never have been heard of beyond the week in which his lucubrations filled the "Poet's Corner;" but luckily for his own fame, and equally for Scottish minstrelsy, his Pastorals, and milk-and-water "Damon to his Friends," "Saturday's Expedition," "Fashion," "Decay of Friendship," *et hoc genus omne*, failed to please himself.

Dreading a nameless grave, down as he was on the very lowest ladder-step of life, and feeling indefinite "stirrings" within him, he turned to his "ain countrys leid" that he loved so well.

They were reprinted in every magazine and newspaper as by the 'celebrated' Robert Fergusson.

The grave propriety of the venerable "Scots Magazine" was disturbed.

Ruddiman's "Weekly" was in every hand, and many an eager circle surrounded readers in the Coffee-rooms.

From every nook of 'broad Scotland,' complimentary verses and letters were received by the publisher."[1]

In town and hamlet, in the tea-party, and round the country 'ingle,' by youth and 'hoary eild' were the poems welcomed.

1 Miss Ruddiman remembered that nothing so vexed Fergusson as the 'reading of these letters' (which Mr. Ruddiman frequently did), when any strangers were present. He would try to snatch them from the reader, and crumpling them up throw them into the fire, with some such expression as the following, "These flatterers have never read Allan's Poems," "I do not reckon this praise, it is folly." Miss Ruddiman vividly recalled another anecdote on a like occasion. Mr. Ruddiman had received various commendatory letters, and on the poet's calling said, Robert, I've got a great many flattering letters about your poems. "Flattering!" he replied: and walked away. He was always uneasy and restless when his own productions were being praised: but would listen for hours to the 'praises' of others. Ross was a great favourite of his, and he used to sing his "Rock, and the wee pickle tow," in evening-parties with great delight.

Mayne has vividly described the scenes that were wont to be seen on the arrival of the Magazine in the country, and the eager interest with which "Rabbie's lay" was waited for.

Blyth hae I seen about the ingle,
The neighbours a', baith wed an' single,
Flock round, to hear his verses gingle,
Frae far an' near,
(The priest wad aft amang them mingle,
An' lean to hear.)

Had ane been owther wat or weary,
Or had some dawted scornfu' deary
Turn'd a' our mirth to blirtin bleery
Wi' taunts right sour,
His canty tales would make us cheary
In ha'f an hour.

'Twas than, as now, your fame gaed roun'
To sic a pitch thro' ilka toun,
That the postboy cou'd nowther soun'
Nor blaw his horn,
But heeps o' fouk wad him surroun'
Be't een or morn.

An' gin they chanc'd to miss their erran'
(When ye had gi'en the lads their fairin',
An' they o' wark had been but spairin'
At case or press,)
Hame wad they gang, like ane despairin,
In sad distress.

But sair we miss our ain braid measure
Sin Rabie die't. [1]

And his Berwick friend 'J. S.' only expressed the prevailing sentiment in the following stanza:

1 Weekly Magaz., Vol. xliv. p. 67, April 14th, 1779.

Is Allan risen frae the deid,
Wha aft has tun'd the aiten reed,
And by the muses was decreed
To grace the thistle?
Na; Fergusson's come in his stead
To blaw the whistle.

From Glasgow a little poem, the "Muses Choice,"[1] proclaimed him the elected successor of Ramsay and the "Laureat of the Capital."

All this too in 1772, when he had but begun "to imp his wing" for greater flights,—for the "Farmer's Ingle," "Leith Races," "Odes to the Bee and Gowdspink" were then unwritten.

It was during the leisure, observes Campbell, "which those in any way connected with the law enjoy, in a degree beyond any other, that he became celebrated as a poet.

"He could now rank among his friends, the first characters of his time, in the metropolis of Scotland. His heart was open and sincere; he was modest, but not reserved; good natured, but not to excess; full of vivacity, and vigour of intellect, and in short, he was the most joyous and covetable companion Sociality had to boast."[2]

Nor were his friendships limited to the capital. Various of his poems are dated from 'Broomhouse,' 'North Belton,' and 'Balledmund' respectively, the residences of landed proprietors, admirers of the youthful poet.

Every summer he was accustomed to spend a few weeks with Collector Lorimer of Dunbar: and it was on one of these occasions that he accompanied a party of ladies and gentlemen from that place, on a "Voyage to

1 Weekly Magaz., Vol. xvii. pp. 337-8, Sept. 10th, 1772.
2 Campbell, in loc. Ferg. Hist. of Scot. Poetry, p. 292.

Fife and the Isle of May." The late deeply-lamented Mr. Sawers of Newhouse vividly remembered these 'Visits:' and the present worthy Captain Hay of Belton House informs me, that Mr. Lorimer was a frequent visitor at 'Belton,' and that Fergusson invariably accompanied him. The uniform tradition of the poet is that of affection and admiration. He was at once the delight, says a venerable correspondent of "Grannie and her oe."

The fascination of his conversation, the exquisite delicacy of his 'singing,' the child-like gayety and artlessness of his manner, the vivacity and brilliancy of his anecdotal powers, his gentle and kindly dispositions, combined with his abilities as a poet, made him the cynosure of every circle: and alas! his circumstances too often introduced him into society where not friendship but familiarity, a "slice of his constitution" for the hour of their revelry, not regard to his interests from very heedlessness, were what he had to expect and give.

It is painful, even with a gentle hand, to touch on the frailties, the short-comings of Genius: but however much I do violence to my own feelings, I must state that Fergusson was, at this period, plunged into a course of dissipation, hostile to all steadiness of purpose, and calculated, artificially, to increase the difficulty of emancipating himself from the low condition of life in which he was placed.[1]

It was on "10th October, 1772," that he became a 'Knight' in the famous Cape-Club,[2] where he met with

1 Lives of Scott. Poets: Ferguss. in loc. Vol. ii. p. 65.

2 By the kindness of the 'Society of Antiquaries of Scotland,' I have been favoured with the use of the 'Minutes and other Papers of the Club.' I annex from the 'Petition-Book' the application by our poet which was drawn out by Herd:

kindred minds in 'David Herd,' the well-known editor of 'Ancient and Modern Scots Songs and Ballads,' 'Alexander Runciman' the painter, 'James Cummyng,' &c.

This club sustained a respectable and sober character: but the "Convivalia" in Mr. Chambers' admirable "Traditions of Edinburgh," opens to us the crapulent habits of the whole society of Edinburgh at this period. Fergusson took refuge from his heart-breaking want, his unending drudgery, as "a stricken deer singled out from the herd," in the excitement and revelry of such scenes.

His 'cheek,' said Miss Ruddiman, I have often heard my brother say, would 'redden' through its paleness if but a hint of such 'meetings' was thrown out: and once on being reproved, he said, with the tears bursting from between his fingers as he held them over his face, "Oh! Sir, anything to forget my poor mother and these aching fingers."

Thus passed the life of Fergusson, "shadows dark and sunlight sheen," the unrelieved drudgery of a machine during the day, the transient relief and mirth of festive gatherings at night, the 'club' and the theatre, alternated with Luckie Middlemass's[1] and the 'Cape Club,'[2]

To the Sovereign and Knights Companions of the Cape.

The Petition of Robt. Fergus[s]on, Writer in Edinbr.

Humbly prays
That he may have the honour of being admitted a Member of their Society.

[Signed] R. Fergusson.

Recommended by
David Herd, Daf.
James Cummyng, Ditto.

Presented on Saturday the 3d of October, Night of Balloting the 10th inst. } 1772

Speak, *Secy.*

His title was, in accordance with the laws of the Club, "Sir Precentor," probably from his fine voice. See Appendix J.

1 See 'Caller Oysters,' p. 17, Note; and Appendix K.

2 See Appendix L.

and not a "Weekly" number of the Magazine without its poem.

An anecdote has been preserved[1] which shows the irksomeness of the poet under his usual avocations. In copying out the extract of a deed in the Commissary-office he blundered two different times: and at length abandoned it without completing it. On returning in the evening, he found that the extract had been particularly wished: and, although with reluctance, he sat down to attempt it a third time. He had not however proceeded half way, when he exclaimed "that a thought had just struck him, which he would instantly put into verse, and take to Ruddiman's Magazine (on the eve of publication), but that he would return immediately and complete the extract. He scribbled out the 'Lines on Thomas Lancashire, the Grave-digger in Hamlet:'[2] and having duly delivered them was returning towards the office, but called, in his way, at the shop of his friend Sommers, paintseller and glazier, in the Parliament-close, where he found the apprentice boy reading Blackmore's [?] lugubrious Epic on the 'Creation.' This furnished him with the point of another Epigram, which he instantly scribbled down and left it for Mr. Sommers.

These proceedings occupied him about twenty minutes, and he then returned, says Mr. Chambers, "to his drudgery."[3]

Many of his Epigrams and lesser pieces in the Magazine suggest similar effervescences of the "poetic fire," for like those of the Vicar of Wakefield's son, they are found "buried among essays upon liberty, eastern tales, cures for the bite of a mad dog, births, deaths, marriages," &c. &c.[4]

1 Life by Sommers, p. 26 sq. Peterkin, p. 30 sq.
2 Poems, p. 197. 3 Life in Emin. Scots. in loc.
4 Vicar of Wakefield. Works by Prior.

In 1773 his contributions to the Magazine had been so numerous that he resolved to collect them into a small volume: and accordingly in that year 'Poems by R. Fergusson, published by W. and T. Ruddiman,' were given to an admiring public.

Mr. Chambers says in reference to this, "it does not appear that the poet reaped any pecuniary benefit from the publication. It is probable, indeed, that this admired son of genius never realised a single shilling by his writings."[1]

No one, I am sure, will be more delighted than Mr. Chambers to learn that this supposition is erroneous.

Miss Ruddiman informed me in 1847, that for his contributions the poet received not large, but regular payment, and two suits of clothes, an every-day and Sabbath suit every year: and from one of the interesting MS. Sketches of his Life by Mr. Ruddiman, I find that his volume of 1773 was published by a subscription obtained in 1772,[2] and that he sold upwards of five hundred copies, many of them at an advanced price.[3] He had a balance remaining of at least £50: a sum which was to him a little fortune. I ask my readers to turn to his poem of "Damon to his Friends,"[4] where they will read of his sense of "prosperity," and of the generous manner in which his subscription-list had been filled up.

Attend, ye kind youth of the plain!
Who oft with my sorrow condoled:
You cannot be deaf to my strain,
Since Damon is master of gold:

O come, ye dear friends of his youth!
Of all *his good fortune partake:*
Nor think 'tis departing from truth
To say 'twas preserved for your sake.

1 Life, Note 5.
2 Ruddiman. MS. Sketch of Life.
3 Ibid.
4 Poems, p. 202.

CHAPTER VI.

1773—1774.

Volume—Andrew Gray—J[ohn] S[cott] of Berwick [?]—Scottish and English poems—Nationality—Dr. Johnson—Theatre—Epilogue Reminiscences—Anecdote—Dr. Anderson—Drudgery—Reflections—Retires to Restalrig—Ode to the Bee—Fame—His Brother—at Sea—his Singing—Anecdote—Bishop—Anecdote—Remark.

Like Ramsay and Burns, our poet availed himself of the prefixed fly-leaves to inscribe complimentary verses in presentation and particular copies, of his little volume.

It contained only nine poems in the Scottish dialect, to wit, (1) Sandie and Willie, an Eclogue. (2) Geordie and Davie, an Eclogue to the Memory of Dr. Wilkie. (3) Elegy on the death of Mr. David Gregory. (4) The Daft Days. (5) The King's Birth-Day in Edinburgh. (6) Caller Oysters. (7) Braid Claith. (8) Elegy on the Death of Scots Music; and (9) Hallowfair.

Although these poems are distinguished by a power of humorous description, and nervous sense, they are by no means the best of his productions: but the 'whistle' of the 'Gentle Shepherd' with its "pleasan' soun'" had long been mute: and the Scottish heart yearned for something in its own mother-tongue, something higher than 'Helenore,' something more *hameil* than 'The Minstrel,' welcome as had been these strains from the "north countrie." To many a lowly reader therefore the little volume of 1773 was beyond all price: not only in itself, but as an earnest of what should yet come.

Andrew Gray wrote Fergusson from Perth in 1773,

> Ye've English plain enough nae doubt,
> And Latin too, but ye do suit

Your lines, to fock that's out about
'Mang hills and braes,
This is the thing that gars me shout
Sae loud your praise.[1]

And in the year previous, J. S. from Berwick had said,

I ne'er appear'd before in print,
But for your sake wou'd fain be in't,
E'en that I might my wishes hint
That you'd write mair,
For sure your head-piece is a mint
Whar wit's nae rare.[2]

The wishes of J. S. were certainly with affluence responded to.

The volume of 1772-3 had hardly issued from the press—had hardly reached the "winnock boles" by the country firesides—when with unstinted fecundity, and increasing felicity, and weight of the *nascitur, non fit*, appeared 'Address to the Tron Kirk Bell; Caller Water; Plainstanes and Causey; The Rising and Sitting of the Session; Odes to the Bee and Gowdspink; The Farmer's Ingle;' and other pieces that have won for him "a far-ben corner in ilk Scottish heart;" and it must be remembered, too, that those in the Scottish dialect were alternated with his numerous English pieces, in which scintillations of the same lode may be discerned by a 'tenty' reader.

Moreover, his nationalism—his *amor patriæ*—was manifested in his spirited repellance of Dr. Johnson's jaundiced prejudices against Scotland.

——— Telumque imbelle sine ictu
Conjecit,

exclaims Dr. Irving, quoting Virgil; still, beyond ques-

1 Poems, p. 72. 2 Ibid., p. 21.

tion, there was verge enough for Fergusson's 'flighting' on Cyclopean Sam's sesquipedalianism.

His 'Ghaists,' or Heriot and Watson, and 'Hame Content,' likewise exhibit his satirical powers to advantage.

In April 1773, an 'Epilogue' which he had composed, was spoken by Mr. Wilson, a popular actor, in the Theatre Royal, Edinburgh, in the character of an Edinburgh buck.

It was received with very great favour; and my late venerable friend, Miss Ruddiman, informed me that Mr. Ruddiman, and a few other intimate friends of the poet, accompanied him to the theatre that evening. Miss Ruddiman remembered 'sitting on his knee;' but when the audience rose up and cheered, the actor, looking towards the box where Fergusson was seated, he hastily retired to the back. He was singularly unobtrusive, and could not bear the thought of courting applause. Mr. Wilson had announced him the author of the epilogue without his consent.[1]

Concerning his visits to the 'theatre,' to which he was at all times admitted free, from his friendship with Mr. Woods, I find that "he always sat in the centre box, denominated the Shakspeare box; and his mode of expressing approbation in comic performances was somewhat singular. Instead of clapping his hands, or using any exclamations, he used to show how much he was delighted by raising his right hand clenched above his head, and bringing it down emphatically on the front of the box, with a sweeping blow."[2]

He soon became, says Mr. Ruddiman, "a professed dramatic critic, and in a club of young men, like himself, who were passionately fond of theatrical performances, he took great delight."[3] The late Dr. Anderson, editor of

1 Miss Ruddiman.
2 Inverarity MSS. Chambers, in loc. 3 MS. Life.

the well known edition of the Poets, used frequently to accompany him, along with other students attending the University, to the theatre.[1]

Thus passed his days; and it is mournful to think that one so gifted,—so right hearted,—so loveable,—so modest, should have been robbed thus drearily of all those bright hopes which had shed their radiance over his earlier years.

> "There were
> Who formed high hopes, and flattering ones, of thee,
> Young Robert! For thine eye was quick to speak
> Each opening feeling: should they not have known
> If the rich rainbow on the morning cloud
> Reflects its radiant dyes, the husbandman
> Beholds the ominous glory, and foresees
> Impending storms."

He continued to toil pitiably in the Commissary office, relieved only, if it was relief, by intercourse with his associates in the evening.

> "His life was cold, and dark, and dreary,
> It rained, and the wind was never weary,
> His thoughts still clung to the mouldering past,
> *But the hopes of youth fell thick in the blast,*
> And the days were dark and dreary."

It was probably when such reflections passed through his mind, shadow-like across the moted sunlight of his revelling, that he wrote the Elegy on the Decay of Friendship, which we have shown has been errantly ascribed to a much earlier period. He therein laments the overclouding of his prospects; and consentaneously abandoned the town, and took lodgings at Restalrig. But the necessity that was laid upon him to return to his post for bread, compelled him to return.

1 Campbell, Life, p. 298.

And thus it was with one whose rare gifts gave him pre-eminence among men, so that while, in the words of Fielding, "he saw and approved the best, he still followed the most dangerous path."

How much he delighted in the country is apparent in the dewy freshness of the poems which he composed while resident there. Turn, reader, to his 'Ode to the Bee,' written from the "gowany burn-banks" of Broomhouse. His faded cheek is lit up with a conscious flush, as he thinks of his "low estate" being relieved by a name on the bead roll of his country's poets.

> Like thee, by fancy wing'd, the muse
> Scuds ear' an' heartsome owre the dews,
> Fu' vogie an' fu' blythe to crap
> The winsome flow'rs frae nature's lap,
> *Twining her living garlands there,*
> *That lyart Time can ne'er impair.*

His brother Henry had been, from 1768, "at sea," and during the intervening years, his mother and the poet received frequent letters.[1] Robert, too, finding that everywhere on Scottish ground, the 'syren pleasure' still waylaid him, thought of trying his fortune "at sea." His constitution, however, was singularly ill-adapted for such boisterous sturdy service; and this, combined with his mother's tears, made him give up his intention.

He resumed his place at the 'copying desk,' and his 'seat' among the "thoughtless and the gay," fascinating them by his conversation and excellent voice, but eating every day a bitterer and scantier meal.

Uniform tradition, says Mr. Chambers, and every other testimony, ascribe to Fergusson an "excellent voice," and a most captivating manner of singing the simple melodies of his native country. An anecdote has been

1 Appendix A.

preserved by Sommers, which at once proves his vocal powers, and reflects a light upon his impulsive nature.

"As a 'frolic,' he laid a 'wager' with some of his associates, that if they would furnish him with a certain number of printed ballads (no matter what kind), he would undertake to dispose of them, as a 'street singer,' in the course of two hours. The 'bet' was accepted, and next evening, being in the month of November, a large bundle of ballads were procured for him. He wrapped himself in a shabby great-coat, put on an old scratch wig, and in this disguised form commenced his adventure at the weigh-house, head of the West Bow. In going down the Lawnmarket and High Street, he had the address to collect great multitudes around him, while he amused them with a variety of Scottish songs, by no means such as he had ballads for, and gained the 'wager' by disposing of the whole collection. He waited on his companions by eight o'clock that evening, and spent with them, in 'mirthful glee,' the produce of his street adventure,"[1] which was similar to that related of worthy Bishop Corbet, a circumstance which may blunt the edge of severity in respect of Fergusson.

Another and equally innocent frolic, was as follows:—having procured a sailor's dress, he equipped himself in it, assumed also a huge stick, and sallying out, paid a round of visits to his acquaintances. He was so effectually disguised that few or none of them knew him; and by throwing forth hints of some of their former indiscretions, he so much surprised them, that they imputed his knowledge to divination. By this means he procured from many of them such a fund of information, as enabled him to give them a greater surprise when he resumed the genuine character of Robby Fergusson. For in the

1 Life, p. 27.

sailor's habit he informed them of many frailties and failings which they imagined it impossible for any one of his appearance to know; and in the habit of Robby Fergusson, he divulged many things which they believed none but the ragged sailor was acquainted with.[1]

Fergusson's powers of mimicry, Mr. Chambers remarks, were "indeed admirable, and he displayed a considerable turn for acting in general."[2]

These anecdotes exhibit the poet in his sprightlier and less shadowed moods; and yet, all the while he was "as a ship without a rudder, tossed to and fro by every passing wind."[3]

'Taken out' as he was, in such a Bacchic city and age, and so down-crushed with disappointment and anxiety for bread, is it a wonder that, perhaps with too unreserved alacrity, he obeyed the call to 'quaff that juice' of which he had sung, possibly from his own experience,

> ——— Whose care-controlling pow'rs
> Could ev'ry *human misery* subdue,
> And wake to sportive joy the leisure hours,
> *That to the languid senses hateful grew.*

He is an object of profoundest sympathy to all who feel the 'frailty' of humanity. Your "honest, fair, worthy, square, good-looking, well-meaning, regular, uniform, straightforward, clock-work, clear-headed, one-like-another, salubrious, upright kind of people," as the author of Salmagundi calls them, have no materials in their nature for charity.

1 Peterkin, p. 42 seq. 2 Life, in loc.
3 Lives of Scottish Poets. London, 1822. Vol. ii. in loc.

CHAPTER VII.

1774.

Awakening—Brown of Haddington—Anecdote—Remarks—Anecdote—Remorse—Seclusion—Bible—MSS. destroyed—Temporary recovery—Accident—Insanity—Bedlam—Mother and Sister—Death—Grave—Burns—Burnet—Henry Fergusson—Remarks—Personal appearance—Character—Campbell—Sommers—Irving—Chambers—Tradition.

But the 'gold was now become dim, the most fine gold was changed.' The lessons which he had been taught, sitting by his "mother's knee," from that Bible which, when younger even than Samuel, he had delighted to pore over,[1] had been, it cannot be denied, far, far departed from; but *now* they began to re-assert their influence.

It is related that when, on one of his excursions to the country, flying from the temptations of the city, he was discovered by the venerated John Brown of Haddington, wandering pensively and sorrowfully in the church-yard of that town.[2]

It appears that, suggested by the scene, Mr. Brown made the conversation 'turn' upon the exceeding "madness of those who, heedless of the awful account which is before them, waste the precious moments of life in idle and profitless gaiety and license."[3]

This "bow, drawn at a venture," by one who was ever "watchful for souls," was singularly applicable to Fergusson's own situation and train of feeling at the moment, and sunk deep into his mind.

He returned to Edinburgh, fully resolved to enter upon an amended course of life.

1 *Ante*, p. xl. 2 Campbell, Irving, Sommers, in loc. 3 Ibid.

How saddening to think that there should have been no one near to have strengthened his resolutions, and, by changing his unworthy 'drudgery' and circumstances, to have lifted him above his unthinking and heedless associates, who too soon succeeded in dissipating his repentant designs. Let us be charitable.

> What's *done* we partly may compute,
> *But know not what's resisted.*

The preceding conversation took place towards the close of 1772; but had become almost forgotten, when a striking incident recalled it forcibly to his mind.

He had, in the room adjoining that in which he slept, a 'starling,' which was an especial favourite, having been given to him in a present from a particular friend in the country.

One night a cat, having found its way down the chimney, had seized upon the bird, which awoke Fergusson with its piteous cries. He rose hastily, and discovered the cause of the alarm, but too late to save the poor 'starling.'[1] The circumstance gave rise to a train of reflection which banished 'sleep' from his eyes for the rest of the night. The words of John seemed to be written before him in characters of fire, "I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee." How sudden and fatal had been the stroke to a "sinless and unaccountable creature!" And he—What if death should come thus suddenly upon him, to whom such an event was not oblivion, but the passage to a state of eternal misery or happiness?

Indulging in such thoughts, rendered more impressive by the stillness of the night hour, the morning found him "wrought up to a pitch of remorse, bordering

1 Campbell, Irving, Sommers, in loc.

on despair." He arose, not to mingle again with the "social and the gay," but to be a recluse from society, devoured by reflections on "past follies," on an aimless and misspent life. All his vivacity had forsaken him; the lips which never opened but to 'fascinate and delight,' were now shut as by the Gorgon.

With a peculiar, wild, accusing look, he refused all invitations 'out.' Religion was now his only theme, and the Bible, as with Collins,[1] his constant companion. The few unpublished MSS. which he had in his possession he committed to the flames; and he was heard to say, 'that the only consolation which the recollection of his poetry afforded him was, that it never had been prostituted to the service of vice or irreligion.'[2] The Rev. Dr. Erskine of the Greyfriars was a constant and kindly visitor.[3]

Shortly before the preceding incident, he had engaged in the excesses of an election in one of the eastern counties, and he never ceased to reflect upon himself for this, and as he often said, 'many, many other follies.[4]

At last his mind lost its 'form and pressure,' a consummation he had anticipated with horror. His body, never very strong, and nervously sensitive, was emaciated and a-jar. He did obtain temporary relief, and had even begun to visit his friends, who, in the words of Mr. Woods, on this 'his second natal day,' could not express their joy,

"To see a portion of themselves restored."[5]

But one night he had the misfortune to entangle his foot with a rod-knob, on the head of a staircase, and fell from it, striking his head violently against the lower steps.[6]

1 Johnson's Life of Collins, in loc.
2 Campbell, Irving, Sommers, in loc.
3 Wilson. 4 Miss Ruddiman.
5 Lines addressed to Mr. R. Fergusson, on his recovery from severe depression of spirits.—Caledonian Mercury, July 9th, 1774.
6 Campbell, Irving, Sommers, in loc. Miss Ruddiman.

When lifted up and taken home he was utterly insensible. Frenzy ensued: and his poor afflicted mother, whose circumstances were such as to "preclude the requisite assistance,"[1] was under the painful necessity of removing him to the public asylum, 'Bedlam.' Two of his most intimate friends called and induced him to go into a sedan-chair, as if he had been about to make an evening-visit. When they reached the place of their destination, and stopped within the porch, the poor youth discovered instantaneously the deception.[2]

He looked with a strange, wild, questioning glance all around: and with choking agony raised such a piteous and fearful cry as never departed from the memory of those who accompanied him.

He was restless and desperate the whole of the first night: but in the morning when his mother and sister visited him he was calm and resigned. He had at first imagined himself a king, and had placed on his head a crown of straw neatly plaited with his own hands. This delusion, however, had vanished.

He thanked his mother and sister for their kindness. He reminded them of his presentiment of the calamity that was now upon him. He entreated his sister to bring her 'seam' and sit beside hin. To all which they could only reply with tears. He checked their grief; told them he was well cared for; and expressed a hope that he should soon be restored to them. At other times, however, he was greatly and painfully excited, exclaiming that he 'should be a minister of the glorious gospel,' that they 'should all see him a burning and a shining light.'[3] Frequently too he would sing with a beauty and pathos and tremulous tenderness the 'Birks of Inver-

1 Campbell, Irving, Sommers, in loc. 2 Ibid.
3 Sommers in loc.

may' and other favourite Scottish melodies, such as before he had never reached. These, however, were but lucid intervals;

> 'Moonlight on a troubled sea
> Brightening the storm it cannot calm.'

He was confined upwards of two months in the asylum.

Alexander Campbell has preserved the particulars of the last interview that his mother and sister had with him.

The evening was chilly and damp. His feet felt very cold. He asked his mother to gather up the bed-clothes and sit upon them. She did so. He looked wistfully at his mother, and said, 'Oh! mother, this is kind indeed:' but again he complained that his feet were 'cold, cold.' When they prepared to leave he entreated them to remain. 'O do not go, mother, yet,—do not leave me.'[1] It was the time however for 'shutting up.' They parted. And in the silence of that night, and alone, he died.

This event occurred on 16th October 1774, when he had only shortly completed his 24th year.

How mysterious, how awful, how utterly baffling to the human spirit are the ways of Providence.

Robert Fergusson removed in the hey-day of youth, and just when he had found a refuge in the Word, which alone healeth.

Jamie Duff, a poor, maundering, wretched idiot, left contemporarily to dree out a weary life until 1789!

Verily! the saddened inquirer has need of the strong upward lifting promise, 'What ye know not now, ye shall know hereafter.'

1 Campbell, in loc.

Fergusson was interred next day in the Canongate churchyard. There were many mourners at his funeral: and many pilgrims visited his grave in succeeding years.

When Robert Burns paid his first memorable visit to Edinburgh, he found only the 'green mound and the scattered gowans.' He uncovered his head, and his great heart was moved even to tears: and the present plain, but touching headstone shall ever remain, a testimony, at once to the poet who rests below, and to his immortal successor. On one side of the humble monument is the well-known Epitaph:

"No sculptur'd marble here, nor pompous lay,
No storied urn, nor animated bust!
This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way,
To pour her sorrows o'er her poet's dust."

The other side bears this inscription:

"By special grant of the Managers
To Robert Burns,—who erected this stone,—
This burial-place is ever to remain sacred
to the memory of
Robert Fergusson."[1]

How fondly Fergusson was beloved by his friends was evinced in a striking manner, immediately after his death.[2]

One of his early associates, a member of the family of (it is understood) the Burnets of Kemnay, having gone to the East Indies, soon found himself on the road to affluence, and remembering the less fortunate situation of the friend whom he admired above all others, he sent a pressing invitation to Fergusson to come over to India: and, at the same time enclosed a draught for £100 to

1 Appendix M. 2 Irving, Campbell, Sommers, in loc.

defray the expences of his outfit. A generous deed! But alas! it came too late.—It fell "as a sunbeam on the blasted blossom." He had breathed his last only a few days before.

Let the intentions of Mr. Burnet however be remembered: and, not only so, but that his relatives in Scotland ordered the amount to be retained by the mother of the poet.[1]

In addition to this posthumous brightening of prospects, his mother had been enabled, by a remittance from her son Henry, to make some preparations for receiving the poor maniac back into her own house, where superior accommodation, and the tenderness of a mother's and a sister's love might have been expected to produce some favourable result.[2]

And thus the short, sad story of Scotland's third Scottish poet is closed.

His life reads one lesson, that genius is too, too often a fatal gift: and that indeed "*there is* a tide in the affairs of men, which, taken at the flood, leads on to fortune; omitted, all the voyage of their life is bound in shallows, and in miseries."

Of his personal appearance, Sommers has left the following account.—He was about five feet, six inches high, and well shaped. His complexion fair, but rather pale. His eyes full, black, and piercing. His nose long, his lips thin, his teeth well set and white. His neck long, and well proportioned. His shoulders narrow, and his limbs long, but more sinewy than fleshy. His voice strong, clear, and melodious. Remarkably fond of old Scots songs, and the best singer of the 'Birks of Invermay' I ever heard. When speaking, he was quick, forcible, and

1 Miss Ruddiman, who vividly recalled the 'tears' of Mrs. Fergusson, when she called for advice on the matter at Mr. Ruddiman's.

2 Irving, Campbell, Sommers, in loc. Appendix A.

complaisant. In walking he appeared smart, erect, and unaffected.[1]

His countenance, says another,[2] was somewhat effeminate, but redeemed by the animation imparted to it by his large black eyes. Mingled with the penetrative glance of an acute and active mind, was that modesty which gives to superior intellect its greatest charm.

Fergusson's manners were always accommodated to the moment: he was gay, serious, set the table in a roar, charmed with his powers of song, or bore with becoming dignity his part in learned or philosophical disquisition. "In short, he had united," remarks Alexander Campbell, "the sprightliness and innocence of a child, with the knowledge of a profound and judicious thinker."[3] "Gentleness and humanity of disposition," says Dr. Irving, "he possessed in an eminent degree. The impulse of benevolence frequently led him to bestow his last farthing on those who solicited his charity. His surviving relations retain a pleasing remembrance of his dutiful behaviour toward his parents; and the tender regard with which his memory is still cherished by his numerous acquaintance fully demonstrates his value as a friend."[4] It may be added, observes Mr. Chambers, that to this day, there prevails but one universal impression in favour of Fergusson.

Cut off in the greenest of his days, he still lives in the feeling of the world, exactly what he really was in life, a gentle and youthful being; of whom no one could think any ill, and who was the friend and brother of every body.[5]

John viii. 7.

1 Life, p. 45. 2 Chambers, communicated in loc.
3 Campbell, Life, p. 300.
4 Life, edit. 1799, p. 27 sq.; 1801, p. 34 sq. 5 Appendix N.

APPENDIX.

NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

A.—Pages xxiv, lxiv.

Henry Fergusson, the brother of the poet, was a teacher of 'fencing' and 'sword exercise,' in Edinburgh; and I have been fortunate enough to pick up a copy of his class-book. It is entitled, "A Dictionary, explaining the terms, guards, and positions, used in the art of the small sword. By Hary Fergusson. Ah me! what perils do environ, the man who meddles with cold iron.—*Hudibras.* Printed [at Edinburgh] in the year MDCC.LXVII. Tract, pp. 23." His dedicatory advertisement to his pupils, and relative postscript are clever, and I annex them. "Gentlemen,—if you expect a learned preface, or fulsome dedication, you will be greatly disappointed; all I intend at present is, a short compend, explaining the technical terms used in the art of fencing. I think I need make no apology for publishing this little piece; I did it at your request, and for your advantage. In so doing, I not only obey you, but follow the example of the greatest men, and I hope it will be of some service to you, in learning [acquiring] the principles of that noble science,—the science of defence, which nature so strongly recommends to all her children. Why should I tire your patience, by dwelling upon the many advantages of this branch of education? These are too obvious to be disputed. As to the disadvantages, they are few and necessarily attend every art or science whatever, even the most useful, the most agreeable. They are not, however, so much the natural offspring of the arts and sciences themselves, as the fatal effects of ignorance and folly. But it is certainly no solid objection to learning, that a few fools make a bad use of it; no, or else the philosopher and the divine, the lawyer and physician, might bid an eternal farewell to all encouragement, to all improvement, as well as the authors. In fine, the noble efforts of human wit and ingenuity are all too imperfect, not to be liable to the objections of the ignorant, the disingenuous,

and ill-natured part of mankind, who always love to cavil, to find fault.

'Cavil they may, but never criticize.'

Adieu, then, gentlemen! and be assured, that fencing cannot be learned [acquired] by theory; it may assist you in understanding the terms of the art, but it is practice alone that can make you artists. I am always, gentlemen, at the hours of teaching, your most obedient and very humble servant, H. F. Postscript.—I am sorry, gentlemen, in this place, to say any thing of Mr. Locke, but your demands oblige me to mention him. How shall I combat the greatest of men, but by opposing to him the greatest of mankind. It is well known Locke was no fencer; it is as well known that Milton was one. The former condemns an art, because he was ignorant of its principles, the latter recommends it, because he understood them; which of their judgments shall we believe in this important trifle? Let candour determine, and the philosopher, for once, must yield to the poet and politician. To give satisfaction, however, to unbelieving people, I shall give them a view of Mr Locke's objection: 'When a man is in the field (says he), a moderate skill in fencing rather exposes him to the sword of his enemy, than secures him from it; and certainly a man of courage, who cannot fence at all, and therefore will put all on one thrust, and not stand parrying, has the odds against him who is a moderate fencer.' Such is the argument of our sagacious logician, which hardly deserves a serious refutation. He tells his reader of a 'moderate fencer,' that is, a fellow not master of his art, a foolish bungler, a mere blockhead. But what is that to the purpose? Is not the same objection applicable to a half-learned idiot, in any art or science whatever? Certainly such a one would still more expose himself if he engaged with an adept, since the superior knowledge of the one endangers the ignorant folly of the other. So far, then, is the reasoning of Mr. Locke from being an objection to the art of fencing, that it is a strong argument in its favour. Let us only oppose common sense to our ingenious metaphysician, and his quibble immediately falls to the ground. Is not an artist supposed to be on an equal footing with his antagonist, in point of natural advantages; and has he not also all the assistance he can derive from his art! Surely, gentlemen, you understand my meaning, or if you do

not, I shall think my labour badly bestowed. All that I desire of you is to be above a mediocrity. A moderate fencer is still worse than a moderate poet."

The various explanations of this little fencing dictionary, are concise and explicit; and, doubtless, of value to all who study the so-called noble art.

Henry or Hary, dissatisfied, it appears, with the slender income derivable from his teaching, went to sea. The following letter, from the Inverarity MSS., was written to his mother, immediately after his first setting out.

I. HENRY FERGUSSON TO MRS. FERGUSSON.

KIRKWALL ROAD, 13*th May*, 1768.

D[EA]R MOTHER,

After an agreeable passage, I arrived here on Wednesday last, having not been in the least sea-sick. I was on shore yesterday, and had an inclination to buy some tea for you, but that article is at present as dear here as in Edinburgh. If we go for Shetland, shall buy some there, as they tell me it is at no higher a price than 3s. p. pound. The manner of living here agrees with me very well. Yesterday I dined for the first time on salted pork, and made as hearty a meal of it as ever I did in my life. If R[obert] is at home, desire him to cause the St. Andrews carrier to leave any word or letter, at Mrs. Currie's, on the * * * [torn away] for me, as she will forward it to Leith Road. Boats belonging to the ship go ashore every day. I have received about 20s. for foils, with which I have bought two cotton check shirts and a pair of shoes which were too little for my comrade and exactly fitted me. We are uncertain how long our stay may be, therefore, whatever you have to say must be deferred till we come to Cromarty, where we will stay to take in beer, and from [that] place I shall write you. Beef sells here at 1½d. p. pound, and 14 eggs for a penny. Shall be glad this finds you free of trouble with respect to necessitous circumstances, and accordingly,

I ever am, D[ea]r Mother,

Yours affectionately,

HARY FERGUSSON.

Compts to sister, her husband, and family, &c.,

This letter was addressed to "Mrs. Fergusson, in Jamieson's Land, Bell's Wynd, Edinburgh;" and it was to this lowly domicile that the poet had returned from St. Andrews only a few months before, while "necessitous circumstances" were pressing heavily upon her, as before they had on him who had been taken from her.

Another letter[1] has been preserved, and enables us gradually to trace his hardworking and chequered career.

II. HENRY FERGUSSON TO MRS. FERGUSSON.

Salisbury at Plymouth, *4th Aug.*, 1770.

My Dear Mother,

You have the greatest reason of any mother living to call a son's ingratitude in question, both on account of my bad behaviour towards you when living together, and my long silence since our separation. On the 18th of April, the day of Wilkie's enlargement, I was seized with the fever and ague; on the 3d May I was sent to Rochester Hospital, where I staid till discharged in the beginning of June. After coming on board, I relapsed and was very dangerously ill, but, thanks to God, and the good attendance of the surgeons, I recovered, and am now as well as ever I was since the moment I existed. You will easily perceive by the date of this [that] I have left the Augusta, but thank God the change is for the better. When this ship was put in commission, I was advised by some friends to apply to go out in her as master-at-arms; this I could not then do, being so very bad [ill], but about the beginning of last month, as I was then able to crawl up and down, I applied, and though there were upwards of thirty candidates, carried my point, having strong recommendations, but, above all, on account of my knowledge of the sword, which has procured me bread here, when many Scots clerks were starving. The ship is to sail to-morrow for the Halifax station in North America, where, and on the passage, we shall be twixt three and four years from England. As we carry both a commodore and captain, the berth I enjoy is upon that account more lucrative than when only the latter goes. The last master-at-arms in the commodore ship, on that station made an immense sum by being provost-martial at

1 Inverarity MSS.

trials; with that chance (my pay p. annum) and fencing dues I shall be able to lay up a good deal of money.

Never [knew] I, what real motherly affection was, till I fell sick, having been obliged to lay out every farthing I had for extra cordials, &c., but these are of little service when compared to the real advantages that flow from the mother's attendance. D[ea]r mother, the climate where we are bound for is so remarkably cold, that I was obliged to buy things suitable to it from top to toe, every article being three prices in that part of the world, and this took up all the trifle I had. I assure you, I am now as careful as formerly I was lavish, having nothing more at heart than to contribute to the maintenance of you at my return. Make my best respects to Mr. and Mrs. Inverarity, to Rob, Peggy, Nan Colly, old Scoroble, John Parker and spouse, &c., &c.

I am, D[ea]r Mother,

Your loving Son,

Hy. Fergusson.

P. S.—Yesterday in the morning a most melancholy accident happened on board this ship. As one of the mariners was playing with his piece, it went off and killed a Glasgow lad of the same corps, who sate directly opposite to him. The half of his head was shot away and his brains scattered about the deck in a most shocking manner: what is very remarkable, the principal person is from the Hulks [?] in Kdy parish, and is called Grierson.

Don't write until you hear again from me, as it is yet uncertain whether we go to Halifax or Boston.

This letter, which still reflects darkling light on the fireside in Bell's Land, was addressed to 'Mrs. Elizabeth Fergusson, to the care of Mr. David Inverarity, Wright, Peebles Wynd, Edinburgh,' and is duly inscribed with the initials of Peter Williamson, the immortal [!] Traveller and Founder of the Penny Post[1].

The following letter, dated "Tartar, in Rapahannock River, Virginia, 8th of October 1773," has been partially published by Campbell and Dr. Irving. I give it from the MS. now before me. It was addressed to the poet.

1 See Note 1, p. 53.

III. HENRY FERGUSSON TO ROBERT FERGUSSON.

D[ea]r Robt.

Since the beginning of last month, when I was favoured with yours of the 1st Feby 1773, I have been in most rivers in this Province and Maryland. Our business was to look out after smugglers; and had we been as active in that duty as others on the American station, I might have been enabled to make my appearance in a brilliant manner: but alas! only a sloop of 80 tons from the West Indies, loaden with coffee and sugar, fell to our lot. I had 16 dollars for my share, 3 of which I gave towards buying a Tender, and every foremast man paid one. The Tender is now mann'd, arm'd, and cruizing Chesapeak Bay, and I am convinced cannot fail of taking prizes; if the officers appointed for that duty are attentive.

We had the most severe winter at Halifax ever experienced in that country. The harbour, though 3 miles across, was frozen over for three weeks; the ship's company walk'd aboard and ashore, nay, all our provisions were got aboard on the ice (which in many places was 36 f[ee]t in thickness), notwithstanding the strong N.W. winds which blow most of the winter. When we arrived at Boston we were ordered to this country, which has been as hot this summer as the former was cold in winter. Such a change of climate could not fail to create sickness in the ship's company: but, thank God, only three have died, one a natural death, and the other two drown'd. I had a very severe fitt of sickness at our first coming here; but being so much given to sweating *it* proved an effectual cure, although I am very weak through that means. I never lived so badly, as aboard here, in point of provisions, every species being the worst of their kinds, and neither butter nor flour to be had.

I desire you will write by the pacquet on receipt, for if you lay hold of any other opportunity, your letter will be too late; the ship being positively ordered home early next spring, to my great satisfaction, being quite tired of a life that my past follies drove me to, and to which I have served too long an apprenticeship. If every thing does not succeed to my expectations, on my arrival in England, I am fully bent to return and settle in this country; having had the fairest offers ima-

ginable, could my discharge have been procured. In Virginia and Maryland in particular, I could do best by acting in a double capacity, by learning [teaching] the small sword, and the exercise of the small arms, there being no regular forces in either province, and the officers of the militia being quite ignorant themselves of that part of their duty.

I desire it as a favour, [that] you would often examine your poetical pieces before you commit them to the press: this advice I hope you'll the more readily take, as most young authors are apt to be more criticized than those who have had a little experience. Pope himself was one of the most careful in this respect, and none yet has ever surpass'd him. When I arrive in England, I shall give you the necessary directions how to send your works, and make no doubt of selling them to advantage, when the ship is paid off.

I am sorry to hear of J. Wright's death: he was a worthy young lad, and one I had a true regard for.

Thick Peter I hope by this time is recovered. I should be glad to hear of Robertson and Addison's[1] success: the latter, if in Edinb[urgh], I desire to be kindly remember'd to. I should also be happy to hear how Sandie Young and John Coomans do, having experienced their kindness, and been happy in their company. In our passage from Boston to Hampton, we had a very narrow escape for [with] our lives, being surrounded with one of the largest water-spouts ever seen, which black'ned the sky for some leagues, and, had we not barely weather'd it, would have sunk the ship and every soul aboard.

Remember me in the strongest manner to my mother, Peggy, [Inve]rarities, Father Parker, &c. &c. If you want to either succeed, or gain esteem, be very careful of what com-

1 Campbell affords us the following particulars anent this individual. "Mr. John Addison, who is alive and aged. He is the only Scottish musician that receives the benefit from the fund for decayed musicians in London [1798]. He practised with much reputation in Edinburgh, in the double capacity of music-master, and fencing-master. He had been a pupil of the celebrated Dr. Pepuch [?], and is, I had almost said, the only musical theorist in Scotland: with him I first studied the elements of musical composition, and I found him always a communicative, intelligent, gentlemanly teacher. He published many years ago, Duetts for Violins, but in so dry a style as to be little relished, yet, the counterpoint is masterly and correct, the melody and modulation want variety."

pany you keep: this advice I hope you'll take, as it comes from one who has lost himself merely through inattention in that respect. Believe me, it is impossible to write you as I would chuse, being invironed with twenty thousand noisy plagues, not to mention execrations so horrid, that [they] would make the greatest blackguard in Edin[burgh]'s hair stand erect. I hope you'll make it your particular care to study such branches of education as may prove most conducive to your future happiness, and appear at least once every Sunday in church (I mean the Church of Scotland), for how can you spend your time better? I was, like many, fond of the Church of England's forms, &c. &c., but having been in many Romish Churches since, find these forms are merely the * * * of laziness, and differ but very little from one another: this you can be convinced of, in perusing a Romish mass-book in English.

I am, with greatest regard,

D[ea]r Rob, your affectionate B[rothe]r,

HARY FERGUSSON.

P. S.—Direct for me on board the Tartar, Hampton Road, Virginia.

The brotherly solicitude, in respect, as well of the character as of the literary pursuits of our poet, is very interestingly manifested in the preceding off-hand, sailor-like letter.

It was addressed to "Mr. Robert Fergusson, to the care of Mr. Walter Ruddiman, jr., Printer, Edinburgh."

The letter of 1st February 1773, was the last which Henry Fergusson received from the poet. The next that reached him from Scotland was an intimation of his death. The following was his answer, on the occasion.

IV. HENRY FERGUSSON TO MRS. FERGUSSON.

TARTAR IN HALIFAX HARBOUR,
6th May, 1775.

D[EA]R MOTHER,

I received your letter of the 29th October last, containing the very disagreeable news of my brother's death, and acquainting me of Peggy's being married to one

Mr. Alexander Duval who, you say, is in a very good way, but the particular branch of business he follows you forgot to mention. It is beyond the power of human invention to describe how I was affected by the loss of an only brother, who always had my interest at heart, and with whom I was yet in hopes to have spent many agreeable days. But that there is no certainty on this side the grave is a truth that we daily experience, and plainly proves that to repine is weakness in the highest degree. I earnestly desire you'll take care of all the papers and writings as he left [a seaman's phrase] for my perusal, for I shall be more pleas'd in being possess'd of them than riches, as the former may serve to perpetuate the memory which the latter can never do.

We are now actually at war with the Americans. A skirmish happen'd at a place ca * * * [torn away] on the 18th ult°. betwixt the Provincials or rebels and * * * [torn away] Majesty's * * * by * * * overpowered * * * after they had burnt two magazines of the enemies stores, [?] obliged to retreat 15 or 18 miles through an incessant fire from behind the stone walls and breaches on the roadside. No certain account of the loss on either side has as yet been published, but the rebels, it is said, have sustained treble the loss of the army. Both camps are so near that the sentries of each army can discourse together on their posts, and the rebels augment daily. Several places have lately been burnt by the army; and it is expected by this, that the town of Marblehead [?] is reduced to ashes. No fresh provisions are to be had for any price in New England, and an entire stop is put to all trade. We are ordered here as a safeguard over the dockyard, where we do duty for fear of the disaffected attempting to set it on fire. Night before last, the New England people here set fire to a quantity of hay that was to have been purchased for the use of the troops at Boston, which obliges us to be more vigilant than formerly. I am glad that the money you received came so opportunely; whenever a remittance is made you shall not be forgot. My greatest desire is, to get home and settle for the remainder of my days, being, as I wrote you before, heartily tired of this way of life.

Remember me in the strongest manner to Mr. and Mrs. Inverarity and family, to Mr. and Mrs. Duval, and all ac-

quaintances; and do not forget to inform me what day of the month my brother expired on, and the disease.

I am, D[ea]r Mother,

Your affectionate Son,

HARY FERGUSSON.

The preceding letter was addressed to "Mrs. Elizabeth Fergusson, to the care of Mr. David Inverarity, wright, New Edinburgh."

We have seen from his letter to the poet, of 8th October, 1773, that even so early as that date, Henry Fergusson was desirous to get his discharge from the service; and by the kind attention of J. T. Briggs, Esq., her Majesty's Accountant-general of the Navy, I find that he procured his 'discharge' from the Tartar on the 12th of February, 1776. Subsequent to his letter of 6th May, 1775, his friends in Scotland never heard from, or of him. It is understood, that immediately on his retirement from the Tartar, he opened a school in Boston, in which he taught successfully the "use of the sword and small arms." His school is said to have been well attended by the Federalists of Boston. I find, too, that he addressed a series of letters on the painfully celebrated 'Stamp Act,' to one of the Boston newspapers, in which, righteously enough certainly, he took part with the Americans. I have to acknowledge the courtesy of America's favourite poet, William Cullen Bryant, Esq., in endeavouring personally, and by the press, to trace Henry Fergusson in America for me. Might I ask any of my Transatlantic friends, whose eye this page may reach, to consult the lists of deaths in the Boston newspapers and magazines 1776 to 1790? Possibly the name of the brother of the poet may be among them; and it should be interesting to discover his resting-place. Advertisements of his school for the same dates may be sought for. Any information concerning Henry Fergusson shall be acceptable, and communications may be addressed (post free) to the editor, care of his publishers.

☞ Might the editor further beg the admirers of Ramsay, author of the 'Gentle Shepherd,' of Robert Fergusson, and of Robert Burns, to favour him with the dates, &c., of any early American editions of their poems?

B.—Page xxvi.

Mrs. Duval.—Margaret, the younger sister of the poet, was a person of great worth and ability. She was particularly distinguished for acts of unobtrusive charity within her own small circle, and for a deep, living piety.

I have selected the subjoined specimens of her poetical talent from the Inverarity MSS., but have done so with an eye rather to their fine devotional spirit, than to their excellence otherwise. I doubt not that they shall prove of interest.

1.—Everlasting Love.—Jerem. xxxi. 3.

How rich! how full! is God's eternal grace,
How bright its lustre shines in Jesus' face.
Who can conceive how much it overflows
Beyond the sin of man, and all his woes?
Christ Jesus left his heavenly throne above,
To show to man the riches of his love;
For this—was nailëd to the shameful tree,
That he might set the captive pris'ners free;
For this—his heart was piercëd with a spear,
That he might loose our bands of sin and fear;
For this—the blood and water from his side
In streams did run to wash his dear-loved bride;
For this—was Christ accursëd in her stead,
To set a crown of glory on her head;
And not in vain were all these wonders done,
For Jesus fought, o'ercame, and vict'ry won;
Oh! love immense—was ever love like this,
Which stoop'd so low to set my soul in bliss?
Oh! wisdom infinite, and pow'r divine,
And love and truth, and altogether shine
In one bright point, to bless my ravish'd heart;
Oh! sweet effect of Jesus' blood and smart;
Here love and mercy flows and knows no bounds,
While God's eternal grace the soul surrounds.

2.—Couplet.

A shadow vain in Adam I was made,
I'm now in Christ the substance of that shade.

The following meditation on a "Rose Tree," is worthy of the devout Meikle.

3.—On a Rose Tree.

Who would think that this little seed should contain in itself a rose bush, with all its branches and leaves, as also many beautiful crimson roses full of fragrance and perfume? indeed, were it not that experience shows it, one could hardly credit it. But so it is; all the ways of God are marvellous and astonishing! But oh! when we consider that the kingdom of heaven is like a grain of seed which grows up in the soul to a tree of life and immortality, then we may indeed be astonished at the mercy as well as power of the Lord. The rose bush, with all its flowers, must fade and die, but that soul which is born of God, is "born of incorruptible seed," which liveth and abideth for ever, and which is so far from decay that it will improve to all eternity. Oh! blessed are all they who are born of this precious seed, which is Jesus Christ; they are secured from all harm, and shall live in joy and bliss with the Lord, for ever and ever, in the everlasting beauties of holiness and righteousnes, never to know any more sorrow or grief; but shall eternally dwell in that sacred temple, "where God Almighty and the Lamb is the everlasting light thereof," to whom be all honour and glory for evermore. Amen!

C.—Page xxxviii.

I gladly avail myself of the following notice of Mr. Gilchrist from Dr. Steven's interesting History of the High School of Edinburgh, [Appendix, pp. 91, 92.]

"John Gilchrist, M.A., usher in the Grammar School of Dalkeith. He was elected November 7, 1750, and died October 1766. The following inscription, written by Mr. Luke Fraser, I found inserted in the official register of the High School scholars, under the last mentioned date:—'Anno Domini MDCC.LXVI^to mortuus est Joannes Gilchrist, annos circiter xlv natus, qui per annos sedecim pueros instituendi munere in Schola Edinensi Regia, summa cum laude functus est. Non confectus annis, non fractus morbo, sed diris laboribus victus; uxore, filiis duobus, filiaque flentibus fato cessit. Hunc excepit Lucas Fraserius, octavo kalendas Decembres, certamine publico inito atque peracto, jam tum agens trigesimum ætatis annum.'"

D.—Pages xlii, xliii.

Missive Letter.—To the Principal and Masters of the United Colleges of St. Salvator and St. Leonards in the University of St. Andrews.

Gentlemen,

As there is now a vacancy in the Mortification of the deceased Mr. David Ferguson, sometime minister of the gospel at Strathmartine, of which we are a quorum of the Patrons; and as we understand the bearer, Robert Ferguson, son of William Ferguson, Writer in Edinb[urgh], is a person duly qualified as an object of that donation; therefore we hereby present him, and recommend him to your care; and we by this entitle him to ten pounds sterling yearly, for the time limited by the Mortification, commencing the first of November last.

We are, with esteem,

Gentlemen,

Your most obedient Servants,

[Signed] James Graham,
Jno. Barclay.

P. S.—The ten pounds to be paid at two terms in the year, Whitsunday and Martinmas, by equal portions, commencing the payment of the first half at Whitsunday next, when the money may be drawn for, on Mr. Graham.

Dundee, 7 *Decem.* 1764.

E.—Page lvii.

The 'document' referred to in the text, was written by Principal Hill to the dictation of Professor Vilant, the latter of whom was at the time [January 29th, 1801,] unable, from sickness, to do more than attest the truth of the account.

"The University of St. Andrews keep no record of the censures inflicted upon young men during the course of their studies, because they are willing to hope, that future good be-

haviour will atone for the improprieties of early days. But as an inquiry has been made on the part of the relations of Mr. Robert Fergusson, whether he was expelled from this University, Mr. Nicolas Vilant, Professor of Mathematics, the only person now in the University who was then a member of it, declares, for their satisfaction, that in the year 1767, as he recollects, at the first institution of the prizes given by the Earl of Kinnoul, late Chancellor of this University, there was a meeting, one night after the determination of the prizes for that year, of the winners, in one room of the United College, and a meeting of the losers in another room at a small distance; that in consequence of some communication between the winners and the losers, a scuffle arose, which was reported to the Masters of the College; and that Robert Fergusson and some others, who had appeared the most active, were expelled, but that the next day, or the day thereafter, they were all received back into the College, upon promises of good behaviour for the future.

"Nicolas Vilant."

F.—Page lxvii.

"The behaviour of Mr. Forbes in the matter just related, has been reprobated as ungenerous in the extreme. But it seems questionable, whether the censure be merited in its full extent. Every man is, no doubt, bound to assist his fellowmen, and more particularly those who are connected with his own family, or have other claims to his patronage, as far as lies in his power. But it is difficult to fix the limits to which his exertions ought, in any particular case, to be carried. It may seem very clear to every one at the present day, that Fergusson was a [young] man of genius, and ought to have been promoted to some office which might have conferred independence, at the same time that it left him leisure for the cultivation of his literary talents. This was, however, by no means so apparent at the period to which we refer, nor, perhaps, at any future period during the poet's lifetime [somewhat oracular]. He presented himself in his uncle's house an expectant of favour; but his expectations might not, to any ordinary-minded person [?], appear very reasonable.

"He was a young man that had *addicted* himself to the profitless occupation of rhyming; [the visit was paid in 1768, when

he had *not* 'addicted' himself to 'rhyming,' when not a scrap was printed or known beyond the College of St. Andrews, at which, as shown, he had thrown off occasional short satirical pieces,] (who could tell he was to render himself eminent by it?) he could not submit his mind to common business [??], and had aversions, that did not appear to rest on very feasible foundations, to certain employments which were proposed [proposed!] to him: and when we consider to how close a scrutiny it is reasonable that those who solicit patronage should be prepared to submit, it does not seem wonderful that he should have been regarded as a young man who was disposed to remain idle [?], and that his friends should have been discouraged from using that influence in behalf of one who did not seem willing to do what he could for himself [all this, when the fact was known, that he had no other relative to apply to, when he had had no situation whatever offered to him]. We know few of the circumstances that took place during Fergusson's residence with his uncle, and it is unjust to deal out reproaches so much at random." — *Chambers.* [Certainly! but equally "unjust," when so few "of the circumstances" were known, to "deal out reproaches so much at random" against the fatherless boy.]

G.—Page lxvii.

The text sufficiently removes the violent reprobation of Mr. Forbes in respect of his treatment of the poet: but from a mass of letters and other documents that have been submitted to me by his grandson, the present John Forbes, Esq., Writer, Old Meldrum: and from other inquiries elsewhere, I have no hesitation in saying that Mr. Forbes appears to have been, in many respects, a very amiable and excellent individual.

He was tacksman of the farm of Forresterhill near Old Meldrum: and died factor on the estates of Meldrum, Udny, Dyce, Straloch Barra, Leterky, &c. He accompanied his cousin, Forbes of Carnousie, to the battle of Culloden, against the rebels: and was appointed judicial factor on his attainted estate after the suppression of the Rebellion. The various letters which the present Mr. Forbes has forwarded to me, from Lord Forbes, Keith Urquhart, Esq., and other employers, express the highest sense of his "worth and integrity." Mr. Forbes died in 1783. I must add, that although Mr. Forbes

held a highly respectable situation, he was not at all in such "affluent circumstances" as Dr. Irving and others following him represent.

At the same time, it is matter of regret, that he did not subsequently place his sister, Mrs. Fergusson, in better circumstances: and that, if for her sake only, he did not procure some befitting situation for his nephew. I cannot acquit Mr. Forbes of at least the suspicion of coldness in allowing his sister to 'dree' out her widowed days under the pressure of poverty so extreme: nor have I evidence to show that Mr. Forbes was possessed of the kindlier affections towards relatives: nor that he was not tinged, to some extent at least, with that spirit which disclaims the "poor." Mr. Forbes had many claims upon him at home, but nevertheless one so deserving, so uncomplaining, and one so nearly related as a sister, ought to have been regarded, in respect of herself and her son.

H.—Page lxviii.

I have stated in the text that Mr. John Forbes, son of the uncle of Fergusson, was likewise a "wooer of the Nine." Under the signature of 'Johnnie Grotts,' his son, the present Mr. Forbes, informs me, many pieces on local subjects appeared occasionally in the Aberdeenshire newspapers. Moreover, Mr. Forbes has forwarded for my perusal several MS. volumes of poems by his father, many of which display not a little satirical power, and others, considerable ingenuity and sprightliness of fancy.

He appears to have prepared a collection or rather selection from his abundant MSS. for a volume. One selection he has entitled "Trifles light as air, by the deceased Johnny Grotts, now first published by his son, Sir John Barleycorn, Bart. *Nemo omnibus horis sapit.* 1802:" and I have read with great pleasure a very humorous After-piece in two acts, entitled 'Anti Impetigines, or Uncle Toby's Nervous Cordial,' the plot of which turns upon the impositions and rivalry of two quacks, 'Dr. Salmon and Dr. Bottom.'

He takes for a motto a couplet from Fergusson,

> 'Tis thine to cure
> Devoid of Esculapian power.

The MSS. of Mr. Forbes embrace Odes, Elegics, Songs, Epi-

grams, &c., &c., and the After-piece above mentioned, and a judicious selection might form an acceptable little volume.

Fergusson inherited the 'poetic fire' apparently, as well from the mother's, as from the father's side.

I.—Page lxxviii.

Weekly Magazine.—The following lines to the memory of Mr. Walter Ruddiman, Founder of the Magazine, appeared in its IXth volume, pp. 287-8.

To the Memory of Mr. Walter Ruddiman, late Printer in Edinburgh, and brother of Mr. Thomas Ruddiman, many years keeper of the Advocates' Library, well known in the literary world.

> ——————Quem semper acerbum,
> Semper honoratum (sic dii voluistis), habebo.
>
> Virg.

With ev'ry peaceful virtue, fraught his mind,
Of unaffected manners, social, kind;
To whom distress in vain could ne'er apply;
Whom honest labour found her best ally;
Whose useful life attain'd each virtuous end,
The gentlest master, father, husband, friend!
Just Heav'n remark'd such merit here below,
And bade his days in easy plenty flow.
Thus blest with ev'ry good the world holds dear,
His life unquestion'd, and his conscience clear,
Of eighty-two revolving winters turn'd,
By ev'ry rank esteem'd, belov'd, and mourn'd;
Without one pang he quits this mortal dust,
To join the perfect spirits of the just.
Where then thy sting! O Death! untaught to spare?
And all-devouring Grave! thy victory where?
Accept these rhimes, thou dear departed shade,
From one whose Muse thy kind indulgence made:
'Tis all she has to soothe her genuine woe,
'Tis all her gratitude could e'er bestow.
O might they on the wings of Fame be rais'd,
And, like thy virtues, much revolv'd and prais'd;

Those virtues too for ever recent keep,
And teach the sullen marble how to weep.

W—— O——.

It cannot be out-of-place to introduce here an anecdote of the celebrated scholar Thomas Ruddiman, who was a brother of the preceding. Miss Ruddiman informed me, that a Lady having once said to the Grammarian, "Mr. R., you have written many a book for gentlemen *in the languages*—but not one for the ladies. Why?" "What! the languages, Madam," was his reply, "the languages;—No—no—*one tongue* is sufficient for any woman."

J.—Page lxxxiii.

The following anecdote of Fergusson appeared in the 'Weekly Magazine' [vol. xxxi. Feby. 26th, 1776].

For the Weekly Magazine.

Anecdote of the late ingenious Mr. R. Fergusson.

Mr. Fergusson being one day in company with some of his friends, and the discourse turning on poetry, one of the gentlemen, who was a little self-conceited, observed, that he thought there was no difficulty in equalling, if not excelling Gray's Elegy in a Country Churchyard, or any of Shenstone's pastorals. Upon which Fergusson and the other agreed that he should, in the first place, attempt the pastoral style; in which, if he succeeded, he should then be allowed to proceed to the elegiac, which the gentleman accordingly undertook to perform. Some time after, having produced his performance to Fergusson, our Caledonian bard began to read it with great attention, till coming to a passage, where the author supposed his mistress seated on an island in the middle of a river, and imagined himself to be writing love sonnets and throwing them into the stream, which he said would bear them to his dulcinea. "By Jove," exclaimed Fergusson, "you are mistaken, *for a river always throws its filth to the banks.*"

K.—Page lxxxiii.

Luckie Middlemas.—Mr. Chambers, in his 'Life of Fergusson,' has given a communication from an individual who

shared in these meetings, which furnishes the following particulars respecting the extent and nature of their convivialities.

"The entertainment almost invariably consisted of a few boards of raw oysters, porter, gin, and occasionally a rizzard [dried] haddock, which was neither more nor less than what formed the evening enjoyments of most of the citizens of Edinburgh. The best gin was then sold at about five shillings a gallon, and accordingly the gill at Lucky Middlemas's cost only threepence. The whole '*debauch*' of the young men seldom came to more than sixpence or sevenpence. Mr. S—— distinctly recollects that Fergusson always seemed unwilling to spend any more. They generally met at eight o'clock, and rose to depart at ten; but Fergusson was sometimes prevailed upon to outsit his friends by other persons who came in later, and, for the sake of his company, entreated him to join them in further potations. The humour of his conversation, which was in itself the highest treat, frequently turned upon the odd and obnoxious characters who abounded in the town. In the case, however, of the latter, he never permitted his satire to become in the least rancorous. He generally contented himself with conceiving them in ludicrous or awkward situations, such, for instance, as their going home at night, and having their clothes bleached by an impure ablution from the garrets,—a very common occurrence at that time, and the mention of which was sufficient to awaken the sympathies of all present."—Communicated in 1827.

L.—Page lxxxiii.

Cape Club.—I transfer to this Note various interesting memoranda, which I have gleaned concerning this famous club. Sommers, in his Life of Fergusson [Tract, p. 18], has given a meagre account of it; but he was not a member until after the death of the poet, and appears to have written from memory alone. The papers, petitions, and minute-books, &c., of the club have been deposited in the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland Museum; and Mr. Daniel Wilson, the accomplished and zealous acting secretary, furnishes us with full details in a book, to which we have had frequent occasion, in annotating the poems, to refer, the "Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time." My quotations are from this work, and the club books themselves, which have been cour-

teously placed at my service. Mr. Wilson's account is as follows:

"The house which stands between the fore and back lands of the famed typographer, Andrew Hart, was celebrated during the last century, as one of the best frequented taverns in the neighbourhood of the cross, and a favourite resort of some of the most noted of the clubs, by means of which, the citizens of that period were wont to seek relaxation and amusement. Foremost among these was the Cape Club, celebrated in Fergusson's poem of 'Auld Reekie.' The scene of meeting for a considerable period, where Cape Hall was nightly inaugurated, was in James Mann's, at the Isle of Man Arms, Craig's Close. There a perpetual high jinks was kept up, by each member receiving, on his election, a peculiar name and character, which he was ever afterwards expected to maintain. This feature, however, was by no means confined to the Cape Club, but formed one of the peculiarities of nearly all the convivial meetings of the Capital, so that a slight sketch of 'The Knights of the Cape,' will suffice for a good sample of these old Edinburgh social unions. The club appears, from its minutes, to have been duly constituted, and the mode of procedure finally fixed, in the year 1764; it had, however, existed long before, and the name and peculiar forms which it then adopted, were derived from the characters previously assumed by its leading members. Its peculiar insignia were, 1*st*, a cape, or crown, which was worn by the sovereign of the cape on state occasions, and which, in the palmy days of the club, its enthusiastic devotees adorned with gold and jewels; and 2*d*, two maces in the form of huge steel pokers, which formed the sword and sceptre of his majesty in Cape Hall. These, with other relics of this jovial fraternity, are now appropriately hung in the lobby of the Society of Antiquaries. The first sovereign of the order after its final constitution was Thomas Lancashire, the once celebrated comedian, on whom Fergusson wrote the well known epitaph. The comedian rejoiced in the title of Sir Cape, and in right of his sovereignty, gave name to the club, while the title of Sir Poker, which pertained to its oldest member, James Aitken, suggested the insignia of royalty. Tom Lancashire was succeeded on the throne by David Herd, the well-known editor of what Scott calls the first classic edition of Scottish songs, whose knightly soubriquet was Sir Scrape. His secretary was Jacob More, the well known landscape painter,

and among his subjects may be mentioned the celebrated historical painter, Alexander Runciman, Sir Brimstone; Robert Fergusson, the poet, dubbed Sir Precentor, most probably from his fine musical voice; Gavin Wilson, the poetical shoemaker, who published a collection of masonic songs, in 1788, whose club title was Sir Maccaroni; Walter Williamson of Cardrona, Esq., a thorough specimen of the rough *bon vivant* laird of the last age; Walter Ross, the antiquary; Sir Henry Raeburn, who had already been dubbed a knight, under the title of Sir Toby, ere George IV. gave him that of Sir Henry; with a host of other knights of great and little renown, of whom we shall only specify Sir Sluyd, as the notorious William Brodie was styled. Some ingenious member has drawn on the margin of the minutes of his election, April 27th, 1773, a representation of his last public appearance, on the new drop of his own invention, some fifteen years later. The old books of the club abound with such pencilled [and pen and ink] illustrations and commentaries, in which the free touch of Runciman may occasionally be traced, among ruder sketches of less practised hands.

"The following was the established form of inauguration of a Knight of the Cape. The novice, on making his appearance in Cape Hall, was led up to the sovereign by two knightly sponsors, and having made his obeisance, was required to grasp the large poker with his left hand, and laying his right hand on his breast, the oath *de fideli*, was administered to him by the sovereign,—the knights present all standing uncovered,—in the following words:—

"I swear devoutly by this light,
To be a true and faithful knight,
With all my might,
Both day and night,
So help me Poker!

"Having then reverentially kissed the larger poker, and continuing to grasp it, the sovereign raised the smaller poker, with both his royal fists, and aiming three successive blows at the novice's head, he pronounced with each, one of the initial letters of the motto of the club, C. F. D., explaining their import to be *Concordia fratrum decus*. The knight elect was then called upon to recount some adventure or scrape which had befallen him, from some leading incident in which the sove-

reign selected the title conferred on him, and which he ever after bore in Cape Hall. The Club whose honours were thus carefully hedged in by solemn ceremonial, established its importance by deeds consistent with its lofty professions, among which may be specified the gift by his Majesty of the Cape, to his Majesty of Great Britain, in 1778, of a contribution from the knights of one hundred guineas, 'to assist his Majesty in raising troops.' The entry-money to the club, which was originally half-a-crown, gradually rose to a guinea, and it seems to have latterly assumed a very aristocratic character. A great regard for economy, however, remained with it to the last. On the 10th of June 1776, it is resolved 'that they shall at no time take bad halfpence from the house, and also, recommend it to the house to take none from them!' and one of the last items entered on their minutes, arises from an intimation of the landlord, that he could not afford them suppers under sixpence each, when it is magnanimously determined by the club, in full conclave, 'that the supper shall be at the old price of fourpence halfpenny!'

"Sir Cape, the comedian [and sovereign!] appears to have eked out the scanty rewards of the drama, by himself maintaining a tavern at the head of the Canongate, which was for some time patronized by the knights of the Cape. They afterwards paid him occasional visits to Comedy Hut, New Edinburgh, a house which he opened beyond the precincts of the North Loch, about the year 1770, and there they held their ninth Grand Cape, as their great festival was styled, on the 9th of June of that year. This sketch of one of the most famous convivial clubs of last century will suffice to give some idea of the revels in which grave councillors and senators were wont to engage, when each slipt off his professional formality along with his three-tailed wig and black coat, and bent his energies to the task of such merry fooling, while his example was faithfully copied by clerk and citizen of every degree. 'Such, O Themis, were anciently the sports of thy Scottish children.'"

From a note of Mr. Wilson's we are informed that "Provincial Cape Clubs, deriving their authority and diplomas from the parent body, were successively formed in Glasgow, Manchester, and London, and in Charleston, South Carolina, each of which was formally established, in virtue of a royal commission granted by the sovereign of the Cape. The American

off-shoot of this old Edinburgh fraternity, is said to be still flourishing in the southern states."

Mr. Wilson mentions the "Grand Cape of 1770." On this jubilee, as subsequently in 1780, 1790, and 1800, the birthday of Thomson, the author of "The Seasons," was kept 'with all the honours:' the 22d of September [in error for the 11th], being duly set apart by "the knights." The words of the musical entertainment of the festival of 1770 are preserved in Ruddiman's "Weekly Magazine" of the date.

In the list of original members, 1764, the name of Michael Bruce occurs. Could this have been the gentle poet of Lochleven? He was at the university, 1762-66; and the records show that students, and even students of divinity, were not quite so rare as black swans in the club.

Some of the soubriquets are risible enough. Thus Sir Fucus, Sir Partan, Sir Nun and Abbess, Sir Hayloft, Sir Beefsteaks, Sir Old Wife [Stephen Clark, music master, the friend of Burns and George Thomson], Sir Baboon, Sir Marriage, Sir Bank [James Sibbald, editor of the 'Chronicle of Scottish Poetry,' &c.], Sir Tumult [James Balfour, the singer, whose portrait adorns the Golf House, Leith Links], Sir Catch [Kincaid the eminent publisher], &c., &c.

From the petition books, I find that Fergusson acted occasionally as secretary. Under the following dates his knightly signature is duly appended, 18th and 22d January, 10th and 14th April, 1st and 7th September, and 12th October, 1773; and his own signature is likewise preserved in the petition book, under the following dates, January 13th, 'recommending as a knight, a Mr. John Hepburn, student of divinity' [the whole of this petition in the poet's holograph]; July 1st, 'recommending a Mr. William Murray, writer in Edinburgh;' 1st September, 'recommending a Mr. William Logan, merchant in Edinburgh;' 7th September, 'recommending a Mr. George Cameron, engraver,' and 12th October, 'recommending a Mr. Dougall Campbell, writer, Campbelton,' all 1773, and all of whom were duly admitted.

There is one very amusing petition which I annex, as it relates to one not "unknown to fame" among the curious. It appears that Gavin Wilson, the shoemaker-poet, had applied for a "knightship," but in vain. Nothing daunted, he re-petitioned as follows:

"Worthy Soveraign and Knights,

"It gave me great unhappyness to hear that my petition was unsuccessfull, and that some weighty objections lay against me; but as one of these objections may be tolerably moderated, and the other three totally removed, I determined to reclaim, and once more lay my petition before the worthy society, in hopes of your favourable acceptance. The first objection, I am told, was the tallness of my person, this not so much my fault as it is my infelicity, when it lys against my admission; but I humbly think that that objection ought to have operated as powerfully against the soveraign, and deputesoveraign [Lancashire and Herd], but perhaps what may be thought a fault in a subject, is sometimes thought an excellence in a soveraign, but this fault cannot be [an] increasing one, as I was at my full length twenty years agoe, and I find that fault upon the deminishing hand; but if I am admitted, I shall wear my shoes as low in the heels as possible, and if there be a chair in the room lower than another, I shall beg to be poss[ess]ed of it, which, allong with contracting my figure as much as I can, I make no doubt but I shall by these means, bring myself nearly upon a levell with the middle-sized knights. The second objection was the largeness of my hatt; the objection shall be totally removed, for I shall have a new Mac[a]roni hatt, which I will call my Cape hatt; and if it be not the least hatt in the society, I will bind myself over to drink the fill of it, either in ale, porter, or punch, every time it comes to my turn to drink. The third objection was, I wore a black wigg; the objection shall also be removed; though I have not wore a powdered wigg these thirty years, I will powder my wigg when I come to the Cape. In the fourth objection, I am affraid that my accomplishments have been over-rated, and that I have got credit for qualifications I have no pretension to; none of the knights of the society, whose oratori[c]al powers have gained them so much reputation, for eloquence and poignant witt, will need to have the smallest apprehension that their glory shall be eclipsed by such a rival, for I declaire that I will (like many knights of the Cape), speak very little, but will listen (like them), with the greatest attention to the floride speeches and brilliant sallies of the orators and witts, and join with them in the laugh of approbation. Nor need the poets have any suspicious apprehension of any endeavour of mine to establish my charecter in opposition or

derogation of theirs; for I promise that I will not be concerned in writing or composing either song, ode, tragedy, comedy, or farce, on any subject whatever concerning the Cape, without the express desire, consent, and licience of the said poets, orators, and witts; and agreeable to this resolution, although I could have expressed my sentiments tolerably in verse, I rather chuse to lay this, my petition, before the society, in plain honest prose, by which the afforsaid orators, poets, and witts may see that they have nothing to fear from my small ability in their way, but that they will continue undisturbedly to enjoy the happiness of exciting the admiration and applause of all the silent knights. I therefore hope that this petition, written on this and the two preceeding pages, will be taken into your serious consideration, and admitt your humble petitioner into all the honours and privileges of your worthy Society, and your petitioner shall ever pray.

[Signed] Ga. Wilson."

Need we say that this whimsical reclaiming petition was successful. His title was Sir Macaroni: but he appears to have forfeited the "honours and privileges" in 1780.

The date of his admission was 30th January 1773. Fergusson had been admitted only three months before.

We here close our 'Memoranda' on the Cape-Club: but the reader is referred to the poems, p. 132, in 'Auld Reikie,' and relative notes.

M.—Page xcviii.

The following documents relative to Fergusson and Burns in respect of the head-stone over the grave of the former, will no doubt prove interesting:—

Extract from the Records of the managers of the Kirk and Kirk Yard funds of Canongate, relative to the erection, by Robert Burns, of a Headstone in memory of Robert Fergusson.

"Session House within the Kirk of Canongate, the 22nd of February, 1787.

"Sederunt of the Managers of the Kirk and Kirk Yard Funds of Canongate.

"Which day, the treasurer to the said funds produced a let-

ter from Mr. Robert Burns, of date the sixth current, which was read and appointed to be engrossed in their sederunt book, and of which letter the tenor follows:

To the honorable Baillies of Canongate, Edinburgh.

"Gentlemen,

"I AM sorry to be told, that the remains of Robert Fergusson, the so justly celebrated poet, a man whose talents for ages to come will do honour to our Caledonian name, lie in your churchyard among the ignoble dead, unnoticed and unknown.

"Some memorial to direct the steps of the lovers of Scottish song, when they shed a tear over the "narrow house" of the bard who is no more, is surely a tribute due to Fergusson's memory; a tribute I wish to have the honour of paying.

"I petition you then, gentlemen, to permit me to lay a simple stone over his revered ashes, to remain an unalienable property to his deathless fame. I have the honour to be,

Gentlemen,

Your very humble servant,

ROBERT BURNS."

"Thereafter the said managers, in consideration of the laudable and disinterested motion of Mr. Burns, and the propriety of his request, did and hereby do unanimously grant power and liberty to the said Robert Burns, to erect a headstone at the grave of the said Robert Fergusson, and to keep up and preserve the same to his memory in all time coming.

"Extracted forth of the records of the managers, by

William Sprott, *Clerk.*"

Extract from the *Elogia Sepulchralia Edinburgena.*

"From inattention in the mason employed to erect this monument, the foundation soon gave way, and it was in danger of falling. When this was observed, Burns, as well as Fergusson, was then also numbered with the dead. Some members of the Esculapian club, animated by that pious zeal for departed merit, which had before led them to prevent some other sepulchral monuments from going to ruin, applied for

liberty to repair this tribute from one poet to the memory of another; and permission being granted, they took that opportunity of affixing to it an additional inscription, commemorating the genius of Burns. The poetical part of it is taken, almost verbatim, from the Elegy written by Burns himself on Captain Matthew Henderson.

"*Dignum laude verum musa vetat mori.*

"Lo! Genius, proudly, while to Fame she turns,
Twines CURRIE's laurels with the wreath of BURNS.

Roscoe.

"TO THE MEMORY OF
ROBERT BURNS, THE AYRSHIRE BARD;
WHO WAS BORN AT DOONSIDE
ON THE 25TH OF JANUARY, 1759;
AND DIED AT DUMFRIES
ON THE 22ND OF JULY, 1796.

"O ROBERT BURNS! the man! the brother!
And art thou gone,—and gone for ever!
And hast thou cross'd that unknown river,
Life's dreary bound!
Like thee where shall we find another
The world around!

"Go to your sculptured tombs, ye great,
In a' the tinsel trash o' state!
But by the honest turf I'll wait,
Thou man of worth!
And weep the sweetest poet's fate
E'er liv'd on earth."[1]

The "pious zeal" of the Æsculapian Club was certainly commendable; but we cannot say so much for their taste in affixing an "additional inscription." Luckily the unseemly sign-board on which it was inscribed, decayed, and on the occasion of the recent repairs and improvements, it was removed. The grave now appears as in our Vignette.

The Gentleman's Magazine (November 1823) publishes a

1 Lives of Scottish Poets, vol. iii. pp. 84—87.

document of a curious nature, namely, the account of Messrs. J. and R. Burn, builders, against Robert Burns, for the expense of the monument. It was as follows:—

"Mr. Robert Burns

1789, To J. and R. Burn.

June 23.	54 feet polished Craigleith stone, for a head-stone, for Robert Fergusson, at 1s.,	£2	14	0
	10 ft. 8 inches dble. base mouldings, at 1s. 6d.,	0	16	0
	4 large cramp irons,	0	2	10
	2 stones to set the base on, at 1s.,	0	2	0
	320 letters on do. at 8s.,	1	5	8
	Lead and setting up do.,	0	5	0
	Grave-digger's dues,	0	4	6
		£5	10	0

The original receipt is now in the possession of Major James Glencairn Burns, son of *the* poet.

The generous action of Burns did not go unnoticed even at the time. The editor has in his possession a contemporary broadside which contains (1) a few stanzas from Hamilton of Gilbertfield's letter to Ramsay; (2) the motto which Burns prefixed to the first or Kilmarnock edition of his poems 1786; and (3) the epitaph for Fergusson, with the following note. "Mr. Robert Burns, the celebrated Ayrshire Bard, with a generosity which does honour to his feelings, has, at his own expense, caused a stone to be placed in the Canongate Church-yard, Edinburgh, over the remains of the late unfortunate Scottish Bard, Mr. Robert Fergusson, with the following inscription:

No sculptured marble here, nor pompous lay,
  Nor storied urn, nor animated bust,
This simple stone directs pale Scotia's way,
  To pour her sorrows o'er her poet's dust."

N.—Page c.

As might have been anticipated, the Magazines and Newspapers of the day teemed with Odes and Elegies and Epitaphs to the memory of Fergusson. I have read a great many of them, but cannot ask my readers to do so. They are, *as poetry*, utterly worthless. The 'Vanity of Human Wishes, an Elegy on the untimely death of a Scots Poet,' by John Tait, W. S., has been usually appended to editions of Fergusson.

I cannot think of doing so. It was the heart-utterance of one who greatly esteemed and loved Fergusson,—but who must have been a very weak and puling (however worthy) man, and entirely innocent of all poetic inspiration.

The following is the notice of Fergusson from the Obituary of the "Weekly Magazine." It was composed by Mr. Ruddiman, jun., and, slightly extended, forms the Life usually prefixed to editions of the poems:—

"[Died] at Edinburgh, Mr. Robert Fergusson, well known in the literary world for his poetical abilities.—To attempt a character of this youthful bard must be a vain essay, as it would be equally difficult to do justice to his merit. No colours but his own could paint him to the life, and we know none in his line of composition capable to sketch him out. His talent of versification in the Scots dialect has been exceeded by none, equalled by few. The subjects he chose were generally uncommon, often temporary. His images and sentiments were lively and striking, which he had a knack in clothing with the most agreeable and natural expression. Had he enjoyed life and health to a maturer age, it is probable he would have revived our ancient Caledonian poetry, of late so much neglected or despised. His *Hallow-Fair*, *Edinburgh Election*, *Leith Races*, are master-pieces in this style, and will be lasting monuments of his genius and vivacity.—For social life, he possessed an amazing variety of qualifications. With the best good-nature, and a great degree of modesty, he was always sprightly, always entertaining. His powers of song were very great in a double capacity. When seated, with some select companions, over a friendly bowl, his wit flashed like lightning, struck the hearers irresistibly, and *set the table in a roar*. —But, alas! these engaging, nay bewitching qualities, proved

fatal to their owner, and shortened the period of his rational existence. So true is that observation of the poet,

> Great wit to madness sure is near ally'd,
> And thin partitions do their bounds divide.

Yet he found favour in the sight of Providence, who was pleased speedily to call him from a miserable state of being, to a life of early immortality.'

ESSAY

ON THE

GENIUS AND POEMS OF ROBERT FERGUSSON.

Some may be disposed to say, with Burns of himself, on reading this heading,

> "I doubt it's hardly worth the while
> To be sae nice wi' Robin."

I demur: but let me not be misunderstood. I by no means claim 'genius' for Robert Fergusson in the highest sense of the word. I have no wish to exalt him, as has been done, to the platform of our Ramsay or Burns. At the same time I do think that it contains matter of much suggestion, that occasional poems, so wholly, seemingly, evanescent and perishable, should still, well nigh a century subsequent to their original appearance, retain all their contemporary attractions and interest, remaining to us, like those delicate fossil-flowers preserved underneath a world-strata.

Within these twelvemonths it was made known that the humble, but memorable headstone over the ashes of Fergusson was going to decay. Instantly, from all broad Scotland subscriptions came in to the right-hearted almoner, Robert Gilfillan (since "at rest" also), and it now stands within its "pillars and chains," renewed and ornamented thus by the hundreds of Scotchmen whose hearts still beat warmly at the name of the author of the 'Farmer's Ingle.'

From America too, is wafted if possible a still more

interesting tribute. Very recently, on an occasion which assembled in Boston the learned and the eloquent and the gifted of our daughter-land, with the peerless Byrant at the head, I read a Scottish Memory-Toast which places the name of Fergusson foremost,—"The four Roberts." Robert Fergusson,—Robert Burns,—Robert Tannahill,—Robert Nicoll: and touching, and graceful, and heart-felt was the fourfold tribute: but especially that to Fergusson.

In making a few remarks on the 'genius and poems of Fergusson,' assuming that it is unnecessary at this epoch to vindicate a place for him, I shall notice shortly these three things:

I. His self-estimation.

II. The twofold object-matter of his poems.

III. His satirical powers and nationalism.

I have to speak, *first*, of Fergusson in respect of 'his self-estimation;' and certainly this is a peculiarly pleasing feature in his character. He was distinguished for modesty. Anxious to win a place in the roll of his country's sons, he nevertheless, *kept back*. Enthusiastic admirers likened him, again and again, to Allan Ramsay. He refused the idle compliment in no pleasant mood. Compared even to Pennecuick, whom he far excels in every respect, he "blushed" and likewise said no. True, when these "flatteries," as he was wont to call them, with particular emphasis, were addressed to him, the 'Farmer's Ingle,' the 'Odes to the Bee,' and 'Gowdspink,' 'Hallow Fair,' and indeed, all his Scottish poems, save only a very few, were unwritten. But, through life, he continued to entertain this lowly opinion of his own merits.

In this, however, he was thoroughly discriminative. While he rejected the compliments mentioned, he nevertheless, with equal fervour, asserted his own particular

claims. Thus, towards the close of his very beautiful Ode to the Bee, he exclaims,

> "Like thee, by fancy wing'd, the muse
> Scuds ear' an' heartsome ower the dews,
> Fu' vogie an' fu' blythe to crap
> The winsome flow'rs frae nature's lap,
> Twining her living garlands there,
> That lyart time can ne'er impair.

They are only 'flowers' that he gathers; but they are such as he feels shall 'never wither;' nor was he mistaken. The same feature is brought out in his 'Epistle to Andrew Gray.' He bids his friend at "Nature keek," and adds,

> "Her road awhile is rough and round,
> *An' few poetic gowans found;*
> The stey braes o' the muses ground,
> We scarce can crawl up;
> But on the tap we're light as wind
> To scour an' gallop.

It will be observed that it is only the 'gowans' that he speaks of, a fair but a lowly flower. He wishes to be inspired, not by the elder makars, or by Ramsay, but by the tender Hamilton.

> "Near what bright burn, or crystal spring,
> Did you your winsome whistle hing?
> The muse shall there, wi' wat'ry e'e,
> Gie the dunk swaird a tear for thee."

And he was right. His was the Doric pipe,—a corn stem plucked fresh from the field, and sweet, and natural, and true as nature herself, is the music. "This is *my* instrument, and I shall play upon it as it is capable." We have smallest faith in Toricelli-anthems on the Jew's harp. It is unnatural, out of place, improbable. albeit semi-historical.

I have to speak, 2*dly*, of 'the twofold object matter of his poems.' The line of demarcation is plain and palpable. Such poems as 'The Daft Days,' 'The King's Birthday in Edinburgh,' 'The Election,' 'Caller Oysters,' and the 'Rising and Sitting of the Session,' lead us into the crowded, grievously odorous, "cabined, cribbed, confined" streets of the town. While the 'Farmer's Ingle,' 'Ode to the Gowdspink,' 'Hame Content,' 'Caller Water,' and 'Ode to the Bee,' take us out into the cool air of the country. The dew lies thick on all his poems, dated 'Broomhouse,' and 'North Belton,' and other "loopholes of retreat." All his 'days' among the 'green fields' were Idyls. His descriptions are tinged with the golden sunshine, and alas! one feels with an autumnal sadness. Those pieces which are laid in the town, dash off, with a few seemingly careless touches, the Edinburgh life of the period. The 'sprushed' city guard, the 'wigged lawyers,' the skirling 'oyster wives,' the crowding 'browster shoppies,' the parti-ragged 'blue-gown bodies,' the 'plouky-nosed' *bon vivant*, the consequential 'bailie,' the dressed-up 'Macarony,' the 'clashing servants,' the jovial 'club,' the lazy 'chairman,' the 'usefu' cadie,' the ancient spinster out 'rather late,' in short, the whole of Edinburgh in the 'olden time,' are presented with the humour of Hogarth, and the fidelity of Kay. There is a simplicity of expression and absence of 'getting up' in these that make them appear to have been much easlier composed than they were—*ausus idem frustra laboret*. What can exceed the daguerreotype precision of this picture of a consequential, vain, up-setting citizen during an "election?"

"Haste, Epps, quo John, an' bring my gizz!
Take tent ye dinna't spulzie;

Last night the barber gae't a friz,
An' straikit it wi' ulzie.
Hae done your paritch, lassie Liz,
Gi'e me my sark and gravat,
I'se be as braw's the Deacon is
Whan he taks affidavit
O' faith the day.

Whar's Johnny gaun, cries neebor Bess,
That he's sae gayly bodin,
Wi' new kam'd wig, weel syndet face,
Silk hose, for hamely hodin?
'Our Johnny's nae sma' drink you'll guess,
'He's trig as ony muir-cock,
'An' forth to mak' a Deacon, lass;
'He downa speak to poor fock
'Like us the day.'"

How the little bustling personage crying for his 'wig' and 'sark' and 'gravat,' and demanding attention from 'Epps and Liz,' and all, is contrasted in the second stanza, with the starched, all-important voter "for the deacon," the observed (in his own mind) of all observers. "He downa speak to poor fock." In one stroke, by the remarks of "neebor Bess" and her companion, is the character placed before us. But, although Fergusson was gifted with an eye to the broadly humorous of "the town," he seems always delighted to escape to the country.

He pourtrays with inimitable ease and felicity the "King's Birth-Day in Edinburgh;" but what says he at the close? He will not ask his Muse to "swell the theme."

"She'll rather to the fields resort,
Whare music gars the day seem short,
Whare doggies play, and lambies sport
On gowany braes;
Whare peerless Fancy hads her court
And tunes her lays."

And thus he ever appears, like his own 'Butterfly in the Street.'

"Poor butterfly! thy case I mourn,
To green kail-yard and fruits return;
How could you troke the mavis' note
For penny-pies all piping hot?"

He visits "Leith Races," but what a delightful vision meets him on the way.

"In July month, ae bonny morn
When Nature's rokelay green
Was spread owre ilka rig o' corn,
To charm our rovin een;
Glow'rin about, I saw a quean,
The fairest 'neath the lift:
Her een were o' the siller sheen,
Her skin, like snawy drift
Sae white that day.

Quo she, 'I ferly unco sair,
'That ye sud musin gae;
'Ye wha hae sung o' Hallow-fair,
'Her winter-pranks, and play;
'When on Leith-sands the racers rare
'Wi' Jocky louns are met,
'Their orra pennies there to ware,
'And drown themsels in debt
'Fu' deep that day.'

And wha are ye, my winsome dear,
That taks the gate sae early?
Whare do ye win, gin ane may speer,
For I right meikle ferly,
That sic braw buskit laughin lass
Thir bonny blinks shou'd gie,
And loup, like Hebe, owre the grass,
As wanton, and as free,
Frae dool this day?

'I dwall amang the cauler springs
'That weet the Land o' Cakes,
'And aften tune my canty strings
'At bridals and late-wakes.
'They ca' me Mirth:—I ne'er was kend,
'To grumble or look sour:
'But blithe wad be a lift to lend,
'Gif ye wad sey my power,
'And pith, this day.'"

I have placed the Verses of the Reverend James Nicol after Fergusson in the Poem. Let us turn to a greater, Robert Burns.

"Upon a summer Sunday morn,
When Nature's face is fair,
I walked forth to view the corn,
An' snuff the caller air.
The rising sun owre Galston muirs,
Wi' glorious light was glintin',
The hares were hirplin' down the furs,
The lav'rocks they were chantin'
Fu' sweet that day.

As lightsomely I glow'r'd abroad,
To see a scene sae gay,
Three hizzies, early at the road,
Cam' skelpin' up the way:
Twa had manteeles o' dolefu' black,
But ane wi' lyart lining;
The third, that gaed a wee aback,
Was in the fashion shining
Fu' gay that day.

The twa appear'd like sisters twin,
In feature, form an' claes:
Their visage, wither'd, lang, an' thin,
An' sour as ony slaes:
The third cam up, hap-step-an'-lowp,
As light as ony lambie,

An' wi' a curchie low did stoop,
As soon as e'er she saw me,
Fu' kind that day.

Wi' bonnet aff, quoth I, 'Sweet Lass,
I think ye seem to ken me;
I'm sure I've seen that bonnie face,
But yet I canna name ye:'
Quo she, an' laughin' as she spak,
An' taks me by the hauns,
'Ye, for my sake, hae gien the feck
Of a' the ten commans
A screed some day.

'My name is Fun—your cronie dear,
The nearest friend ye hae;
An' this is Superstition here,
An' that Hypocrisy.
I'm gaun to Mauchline Holy Fair,
To spend an' hour in daffin':
Sin ye'll go there, yon runkl'd pair,
We will get famous laughin'
At them this day.'"

I cordially admit, with Professor Walker, the beauty of this stenographic sketch of a Summer-day, and of the impersonation, but I cannot agree to rob Fergusson of his due praise.

The 'Fun' of the Ayrshire Bard cannot for one moment be placed before the Mirth of the "Leith Races."

As we have remarked, our poet was never so happy as when in the country. His eye sparkles and his heart beats hopefully when he feels himself breathing the naturally scented air.

"O Nature! canty, blithe, and free,
Whare is there keekin' glass like thee.

and again:—

——— when the Dog-day heats begin
To birsle and to peel the skin,

May I lie streekit at my ease
Beneath the cauler shady trees,
(Far frae the din o' borrow town),
Whare water plays the haughs bedown;
To jouk the Summer's rigour there,
And breathe awhile the cauler air,
'Mang herds, and honest cottar fouck,
That till the farm, and feed the flock;
Careless o' mair ———————

He is thus "streekit at his ease" when a Bee hums heavily past him, weighing down, perhaps, the bobbing clover-tops within his view; or when the Gowdspink perches on the blossomed thorn, scattering its full snowy flowers upon the green grass, and with what evident delight and naturalness does he greet them. I must cite a few lines in the 'Ode to the Gowdspink.'

"Sure, nature herried mony a tree,
For spraings and bonny spats to thee;
Nae mair the rainbow can impart
Sic glowing ferlies o' her art,
Whase pencil wrought its freaks at will
On thee, the sey-piece o' her skill.
Nae mair thro' straths in simmer dight,
We seek the rose to bless our sight;
Or bid the bonny wa' flow'rs blaw,
Where yonder ruins crumblin' fa'.
Thy shinin' garments far outstrip
The cherries upo' Hebe's lip,
And foul the tints that nature chose
To busk and paint the crimson rose."

To present all the exquisite touches of these two 'Odes,' would be to transcribe the entire poems. My readers cannot do better than turn to them for themselves.

Every one who possesses Fergusson, is certain to possess a copy of Burns. Let me ask all who wish to feel the influence of our poet on that master-mind, to read

the most hallowed of all Scottish poems, the "Cottar's Saturday Night," in the light of the "Farmer's Ingle."

What can exceed the truthfulness of the following picture? "Grannie" has been telling the "bairns" of stories of ghosts and auld warld tales, "that touzle a' their tap, and gar them shake wi' fear!" for "wi' eild our idle fancies a' return," and most touchingly apologizes the poet, "The mind's aye cradled when the grave is near," and then she is presented to us,

"——— Thrift industrious, bides her latest days,
Tho' age her sair-dow'd front wi' runcles wave;
Yet frae the russet lap the spindle plays,
Her e'enin' stent reels she as weel's the lave.
On some feast-day, the wee things, buskit braw,
Shall heeze her heart up wi' a silent joy,
Fu' cadgie that her head was up, and saw
Her ain spun cleedin' on a darlin' oy,
Careless tho' death should mak' the feast her foy."

Mark the concluding stanza,

"Peace to the husbandman and a' his tribe,
Whase care fells a' our wants frae year to year!
Lang may his sock and cou'ter turn the glybe,
And bauks o' corn bend down wi' laded ear!
May Scotia's simmers ay look gay and green;
Her yellow har'sts frae scoury blast decreed!
May a' her tenants sit fu' snug and bien,
Frae the hard grip o' ails and poortith freed,
And a lang lasting train o' peacefu' hours succeed!

The whole poem is distinguished by that felicity of thought and rhythm, which irresistibly impels one to *get it by heart.*

I have to speak, 3*dly*, of his 'satirical powers and nationalism.' For illustration of this head, I need only adduce his address to "the Principal and Professors of the University of St. Andrews, on their superb treat to

Dr. Samuel Johnson," and "Hame Content." The ludicrous familiarity and ease of the former, and the off-hand biting severity of the latter, are alike admirable. Let us read in 'Hame Content.' He has exposed "the weary granes" of those who "rax and gaunt the lee-lang day," from very idleness. He has asked the sages,

> ——————— If man was made,
> To dree this hatefu' sluggard trade?
> Steekit frae nature's beauties a'
> That daily on his presence ca';
> At hame to girn, and whinge, and pine
> For fav'rite dishes, fav'rite wine.

He answers, No; points to the 'soaring bird,' the 'dewy grass,' the 'feeding cattle,'

> "Unyokit frae their winter stent;"

and exclaims,

> "Unyoke thee, man, and binna sweer,
> To ding a hole in ill-hain'd gear."

Then with inimitable '*pawkiness*,'

> "Some daft chiel reads, and taks advice;
> The chaise is yokit in a trice;
> Awa' drives he like hunted deil,
> And scarce tholes time to cool his wheel,
> Till he's, Lord kens! how far awa',
> At Italy, or well o' Spa."

With what arch mingling of sarcasm and patriotic sentiment does he follow up this—

> "There rest him weel! for eith can we
> Spare mony glaikit gowks like he;
> They'll tell whare Tiber's waters rise,
> What sea receives the drumly prize,
> That never wi' their feet hae met
> The marches o' their ain estate."

How different was the poet himself! Truly said he,

"My muse will nae gae far frae hame,
Nor scour a' airths to hound for fame."

The following is risible enough—

"O Muse, be kind, an dinna fash us
To flee awa' beyont Parnassus,
Nor seek for Helicon to wash us,
That heath'nish spring;
Wi' Highland whisky scour our hausses,
An' gar us sing.

Begin then, dame! ye've drunk your fill,
You woudna hae the tither gill?
You'll trust me, mair would do you ill,
And ding you doited:
Troth, 'twould be sair agains my will
To hae the wyte o't."

His patriotic feeling emerges in the address to the Professors.

"Ah! willawin's for Scotland now,
Whan she maun stap ilk birky's mou,
Wi' eistacks, grown as 'twere in pet
In foreign land, or green-house het,
Whan cog o' brose and cutty spoon,
Is a' our cottar childer's boon,
Wha thro' the week, till Sunday's speal,
Toil for pease-cods an' gude lang kail."

How naïvely does he 'sklent his satire' in the "Butterfly."

Now shou'd our sclates wi' hailstanes ring,
What cabbage-fauld wad screen your wing?
Say, fluttering fairy: wer't thy hap
To light beneath braw Nanny's cap,
Wad she, proud butterfly of May,
In pity lat you skaithless stay?

The furies glancing frae her ein
Wad rug your wings o' siller sheen
That, wae for thee! far, far outvy
Her Paris artists' finest dye:

His "Braid Claith" embodies a melancholy and still patent truth. Beyond all question

"Braid Claith lends fock an unco heeze,
Maks many kail-worms butterflies,
Gies mony a doctor his degrees
For little skaith:
In short, you may be what you please
Wi' gude Braid Claith."

Take the following comment on the whole poem from the 'Essays' of one of the most vigorous and ill understood of modern thinkers, John Sterling.

"The English are good friends: yet, so much is the fear of being connected with poverty in the eyes of the world stronger than friendship, that if an Englishman were to appear in the streets of London with an old coat on, I am persuaded that three out of four of his acquaintances would refuse to acknowledge him, unless it were in a very private place indeed: and then they probably would fear the sparrows on the house-tops, lest 'a bird of the air should carry the matter.'"[1]

I have thus shortly considered these three things in respect of Robert Fergusson.

I. His self-estimation.

II. The twofold object-matter of his poems.

III. His satirical powers and nationalism.

I have left the English poems, as of inferior, nay of lowest merit, unnoticed.

"I have long admired Fergusson," wrote the illustrious Wordsworth to the Editor; "several of his pieces I have

1 English Society. Essays and Tales, vol. II. p. 37; edit. 2 vols. 1848.

for many years committed to memory; and I have often mourned over his untimely death. He was a great loss to Scotland: and the loss would have been greater had he not been followed by his mighty successor Robert Burns."

It ought never to be forgotten that it was on meeting with Fergusson's "Scottish Poems," when, in his earlier years, he had given up all poetry, that Burns, (to use his own memorable words), "strung anew his wildly sounding lyre, with emulating vigour:" and that thus, mediately, the world is indebted to Fergusson for many of *his* "thoughts that breathe, and words that burn." Beyond all doubt, aside from the generous exaggerations of the Ayrshire Bard, Robert Fergusson *is* "worthy to sing aye round his cloudy throne." He may not soar to the "forked height" where *our* monarch-poet "sole sits." His "rhythms" are not, like those of the "high chief of Scottish Song," the surface to a mine of profound thought. There are in him no broad day-break lights, cast on humanity or this mysterious world of ours. His voice is not of Ocean "with all its solemn noise." He should be rather described by Coleridge's

"————————hidden brook
In the leafy month of June,
That to the sleeping woods all night
Singeth a quiet tune;"

or by Wordsworth's

"————Violet by a mossy stone
Half hidden to the eye."

And now Robert Fergusson is a name that Scotland "shall not willingly let die."

POEMS

OF

ROBERT FERGUSSON.

POEMS IN THE SCOTTISH DIALECT.

ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF MR. DAVID GREGORY,

LATE PROFESSOR OF MATHEMATICS IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.

[Died 13th April, 1765.]

Now mourn, ye college masters a' !
And frae your ein a tear lat fa',
Fam'd Gregory death has taen awa'
Without remeid;
The skaith ye've met wi's nae that sma',
Sin Gregory's dead. [1]

The students too will miss him sair,
To school them weel his eident care,
Now they may mourn for ever mair,
They hae great need;
They'll hip the maist fek o' their lear,
Sin Gregory's dead.

1 Lament in rhyme, lament in prose,
Wi' saut tears trickling down your nose:
Our bardie's fate is at a close,
Past a' remeid:
The last sad capstane of his woes;
Poor Mailie's dead.
Burns' Elegy on the Death of Mailie.

He could, by Euclid, prove lang syne
A ganging point compos'd a line;
By numbers too he cou'd divine,
Whan he did read,
That three times three just made up nine;
But now he's dead.

In algebra weel skill'd he was,
An' kent fu' weel proportion's laws;
He cou'd make clear baith B's and A's
Wi' his lang head;
Rin owr surd roots, but cracks or flaws;
But now he's dead.

Weel vers'd was he in architecture,
An' kent the nature o' the sector,
Upon baith globes he weel cou'd lecture,
An' gar's tak heid;
Of geometry he was the hector;
But now he's dead.

Sae weel's he'd fley the students a',
Whan they war skelpin' at the ba',
They took leg bail and ran awa',
Wi' pith and speid;
We winna get a sport sae braw
Sin Gregory's dead.

Great 'casion hae we a' to weep,
An' cleed our skins in mourning deep,
For Gregory death will fairly keep
To take his nap;
He'll till the resurrection sleep
As sound's a tap.

THE DAFT DAYS.

[There is a poem under this title by the Rev. James Nicol of Traquair, which wants the vigour of Fergusson, but which certainly gives a graphic and humorous account of the same 'daft' season as is it celebrated in the country. This poem, the 'Kern Supper,' the 'Lammas Feast,' and the 'Address to an Auld Maid, on seeing her spaein' her fortune in a tea-cup,' by the same author, preserve various Scottish customs and superstitions (fraets) which are unnoticed elsewhere. Altogether it affords us pleasure to commend Mr. Nicol's two small volumes published in 1805 to a not unworthy place in our Doric literature. The 'Daft Days' in Scotland correspond with those which are in England denominated the 'Christmas Holidays.' They are, 1st, Yule (Christmas); 2d, Hogmanay (last day of the year); 3d, New Year (first day of the year); 4th, Handsel Monday (first Monday of the year.) They have evidently received the designation of 'daft' from the wild festivity by which they were wont to be distinguished "in auld lang syne." The ancient carousing hospitality of this season is now "of the things that were," except among the *very* vulgar; but still, as at Abbotsford, there are those among us who would with Sir Walter deem it 'uncanny,' and who would with him feel 'uncomfortable,' were the new year not to be welcomed in, in the midst of their families, with the immemorial libation of a 'het pint.']

Now mirk December's dowie face
Glowrs owr the rigs[1] wi' sour grimace,
While, thro' his *minimum* of space,
The bleer-ey'd sun,
Wi' blinkin' light and stealing pace,
His race doth run.

From naked groves nae birdie sings;
To shepherd's pipe nae hillock rings;

1 "Glours our the rigs," in first edition.

The breeze nae od'rous flavour brings
From Borean cave;
And dwyning Nature droops her wings,
Wi' visage grave.

Mankind but scanty pleasure glean
Frae snawy hill or barren plain,
Whan Winter, 'midst his nipping train,
Wi' frozen spear,
Sends drift owr a' his bleak domain,
And guides the weir.

Auld Reikie! thou'rt the canty hole,
A bield for mony a caldrife soul,
Wha snugly at thine ingle loll,
Baith warm and couth;
While round they gar the bicker roll
To weet their mouth.

When merry Yule-day comes, I trow,
You'll scantlins find a hungry mou;
Sma' are our cares, our stamacks fou
O' gusty gear,
And kickshaws, strangers to our view,
Sin' fairn-year.

Ye browster wives! now busk ye bra,
And fling your sorrows far awa';
Then, come and gie's the tither blaw
O' reaming ale,
Mair precious than the Well of Spa,
Our hearts to heal.

Then, tho' at odds wi' a' the warl',
Amang oursells we'll never quarrel;
Tho' Discord gie a canker'd snarl
To spoil our glee,
As lang's there's pith into the barrel
We'll drink and 'gree.

Fiddlers! your pins in temper fix,
And roset weel your fiddlesticks,[1]
But banish vile Italian tricks
From out your quorum,
Nor fortes wi' pianos mix—
Gie's Tullochgorum.[2]

For nought can cheer the heart sae weel
As can a canty Highland reel;

1 Come, fiddlers, gie your strings a twang,
And rozet weel your bow.

TARRAS' POEMS, 1804, p. 97.

2 This stanza is invariably prefixed to the 'Tullochgorum' of Skinner of Linshart, that "first of Scottish Songs," as Burns calls it, enthusiastically oblivious of his own unrivalled minstrelsy; and I believe that it was the germ of the whole of that song. The following stanza may suffice in proof; and let it be remembered that Fergusson's appeared in the Weekly Magazine, Jan. 2, 1772, while Skinner's did not until April 1776 in the Scots Weekly Magazine.

What needs there be sae great a fraise,
Wi' dringing dull Italian lays?
I wadna gie our ain strathspeys
For half a hunder score o' em,
They're dowf and dowie, dowf and dowie,
Dowf and dowie at the best
Wi' a' their variorum:—
They're dowf and dowie at the best,
Their allegros and a' the rest,
They canna please a Scottish taste;
Compared wi' Tullochgorum.

Fergusson's stanza as the motto is somewhat disingenuously suppressed in the collected edition of Skinner's works. (Vol. IV. supplementary).

It even vivifies the heel
To skip and dance:
Lifeless is he wha canna feel
Its influence.

Let mirth abound; let social cheer
Invest the dawning of the year;
Let blithesome[1] innocence appear
To crown our joy;
Nor envy, wi' sarcastic sneer,
Our bliss destroy.

And thou, great god of *aqua vitæ!*
Wha sways the empire of this city—
When fou we're sometimes capernoity—
Be thou prepar'd
To hedge us frae that black banditti,
The City Guard.[2]

'The Reel o' Tullochgorum' forms one of the most effective of Geikie's inimitable etchings. (1 vol. 4to, No. 17.)

1 *Var.* sportive.

2 This "cankered pack," as Fergusson calls the City Guard in 'Hallow-fair,' was a body of armed police which existed in Edinburgh from an early date up to 1817, when it was finally dissolved. It was composed of a hundred men or thereby, divided into three companies, the officers being generally decayed tradesmen, and the privates, so called, invalid members of (as from our Poet's humorous mimicry should have been supposed) Highland regiments. Many curious anecdotes and reminiscences of this notable band will be found in Kay's 'Portraits;' and likewise in Wilson's truly invaluable 'Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time.' They are frequently mentioned by Scott, and especially in the 'Heart of Mid-Lothian,' in which, in describing the guard particularly, he adverts to the frequent notice which Fergusson takes of them, which, he says, "might have almost entitled him to be considered their poet-laureate." The Lochaber axes and other paraphernalia of the 'body' are now in the Museum of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland.

ELEGY

ON THE DEATH OF SCOTS MUSIC.

Mark it, Cesario! it is old and plain,
The spinsters and the knitters in the sun,
And the free maids that weave their thread with bones,
Do use to chant it.

SHAKSPEARE'S TWELFTH NIGHT, Act ii. Sc. 4.

On Scotia's plains, in days of yore,
When lads and lasses tartan wore,
Saft Music rang on ilka shore,
In hamely weid;
But Harmony is now no more,
And Music dead.

Round her the feather'd choir would wing,
Sae bonnily she wont[1] to sing,
And sleely wake the sleeping string,
Their sang to lead,
Sweet as the zephyrs of the spring;
But now she's dead.

Mourn ilka nymph and ilka swain,
Ilk sunny hill and dowie glen;
Let weeping streams and Naiads drain
Their fountain head;
Let echo swell the dolefu' strain,
Since Music's dead.[2]

1 *Var.* us'd.

2 Hogg, in his notes on Burns, has recorded that Scott once showed him "a very old metrical tale in heroic measure, as old apparently as Gawin Douglas's day, in which all the birds and beasts of the forest are called upon, as in his Elegy on the death of Captain Matthew Henderson, to 'lament:'" and that Scott said Burns' Elegy was taken therefrom. This is very problematical, as these old quaint-named poems were excessively rare and inaccessible to Burns. Is the Elegy not rather a magnificent expansion of the present stanza, with scattered suggestions from other lines of the elegy?

Whan the saft vernal breezes ca'
The grey-hair'd Winter's fogs awa',
Naebody then is heard to blaw,
Near hill or mead,
On chaunter or on aiten straw,
Since Music's dead.

Nae lasses now, on simmer days,
Will lilt at bleaching of their claes;
Nae herds on Yarrow's bonny braes,
Or banks of Tweed,
Delight to chant their hameil lays,
Since Music's dead.

At glomin', now, the bagpipe's dumb,
Whan weary owsen hameward come;
Sae sweetly as it wont to bum,
And pibrachs skreed;
We never hear its warlike hum,
For Music's dead.

Macgibbon's[1] gane: Ah! waes my heart!
The man in music maist expert,

1 M'Gibbon was celebrated in his time for his great execution on the violin. According to Tytler, in the Transactions of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland, vol. i., he was for "many years leader of the orchestra of the Gentlemen's Concert at Edinburgh," and was thought to play the music of Corelli, Geminiani and Handel with, as observed, "great execution and judgment." He died, 1756, bequeathing the whole of his 'estates and effects' to the Royal Infirmary of Edinburgh. I annex a list of his Works, which are generally esteemed good: 1, Six Sonatos, or Solos for a German flute, or violin, composed by William Macgibbon. Edin. 1740. 2, A Collection of Scots tunes, some with variations for a violin, hautboy or German flute, with a bass for a violoncello or harpsichord. By William Macgibbon. Book i., 1743. 3, A second collection, &c. Edin. 1746. 4, A third collection, &c. Edin. 1755. There is a vignette portrait of M'Gibbon introduced in the title-page of Flores Musicæ or the Scots Musician, 1773, folio. The following notice of him occurs in Claudero's 'Lines on secing a Scots Fidler in laced Clothes:'

Wha cou'd sweet melody[1] impart,
And tune the reed,
Wi' sic a slee and pawky art;
But now he's dead.

Ilk carline now may grunt and grane,
Ilk bonny lassie make great mane;
Since he's awa', I trow there's nane[2]
Can fill his stead;
The blythest sangster on the plain!
Alake, he's dead!

Now foreign sonnets bear the gree,
And crabbit queer variety
Of sounds fresh sprung frae Italy,
A bastard breed!
Unlike that saft-tongu'd melody
Which now lies dead.

Can[3] lav'rocks at the dawning day,
Can[4] linties chirming frae the spray,
Or todling burns that smoothly play
O'er gowden bed,

——Apply to your cliff for crotchet and brief,
Nor by dress on your scholars impose:
For your tassel, M'Gibbon, of fidlers the chief,
If alive, would have twisted your nose.
His merit conspicuous through Britain did shine,
(His collection yet speaks for itself:)
No frubble was he, a true son of the Nine,
And in plain simple dress he got pelf.
Poems on Several Occasions. London, 1765. p. 36.

Claudero is the assumed name of James Wilson, of whom a long and very curious account will be found in Wilson's 'Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time,' vol. ii. pp. 213-20.

1 *Var.* Harmony.
2 *Var.* deil ane.
3 *Var.* cou'd.
4 *Var.* cou'd.

Compare wi' Birks of Indermay ?[1]
But now they're dead.

O Scotland ! that cou'd yence afford
To bang the pith of Roman sword,
Winna your sons, wi' joint accord,
To battle speed,
And fight till Music be restor'd,
Which now lies dead ?

THE KING'S[2] BIRTH-DAY IN EDINBURGH.

O quale hoc hurly-burly fuit, si forte vidisses
[Pypantes arsas, et flavo sanguine breikas
Dripantes, hominumque heartas et prœlia faintas.]

POLEMO-MEDDINIA, (DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN.)

[The patriarchal reign of George III. afforded many returning 'Birth-days;' but in these more staid and starched times we have little sympathy with the enthusiastic loyalty expressed in 'Auld Reekie' on such occasions. By all, however, says Robert Chambers, "who remember the streets of Edinburgh on a king's birth-day previous to the year 1810, the fidelity of Fergusson's description will be acknowledged." And even yet, if not on a birth-day, at least on 'visits' such as those which

1 This truly delightful air, which is known to have been the favourite one of Fergusson, is variously named Inder-, Ender-, Inner-, and Invermay. Mallet, the author of the current words, calls it 'Endermay.' Will no one [Ballantyne or Vedder ?] arise to rescue this very beautiful air from the miserable rhymes of Mallet and Bryce ? An attempt has been made in Wood's 'Songs of Scotland,' vol. i. p. 72; but the author of 'The Social Cup,' who is so very capable of writing well, ought certainly, in justice to his own "fair fame," to have paused, after the severe animadversions on the 'elder' before hazarding such drawing-room verses in substitution.

2 George III.

Victoria has been pleased to make, is Scotland, with all her ancient faithfulness and heart-warmth, forward to welcome her Sovereign.]

I SING the day sae aften sung,
Wi' which our lugs hae yearly rung,
In whase loud praise the Muse has dung
A' kind o' print;
But wow! the limmer's fairly flung;
There's naething in't

I'm fain to think the joys the same
In London town as here at hame,
Whare folk of ilka age and name,
Baith blind and cripple,
Forgather aft, O fy for shame!
To drink and tipple.

O Muse, be kind, and dinna fash us,
To flee awa' beyont Parnassus,
Nor seek for Helicon to wash us,
That heath'nish spring;
Wi' Highland whisky scour our hawses,
And gar us sing.

Begin then, dame, ye've drunk your fill,
You wouldna hae the tither gill?
You'll trust me, mair would do you ill,
And ding you doitet;
Troth 'twould be sair agains my will
To hae the wyte o't.

Sing then, how, on the fourth of June,
Our bells screed aff a loyal tune,

Our antient castle shoots at noon,
Wi' flag-staff buskit,
Frae which the soldier blades come down
To cock their musket.

Oh willawins, Mons Meg![1] for you,
'Twas firing crack'd thy muckle mou';
What black mishantar gart ye spew
Baith gut and ga'?
I fear they bang'd thy belly fu'
Against the law.

Right seldom am I gi'en to bannin,
But, by my saul, ye was a cannon,
Cou'd hit a man had he been stauning
In shire o' Fife,

1 This is an enormous piece of artillery, of rude and primitive construction, which still points its 'muckle mou' from the king's bastion towards the city. It was removed to the Tower of London in 1754 as 'unserviceable,' but on the intervention of Sir Walter Scott was restored, with a new carriage. It consists of longitudinal bars and staves hooped, and is twenty inches in the bore, the length being nearly eighteen feet. Evidence, which fully satisfied Sir Walter Scott, has been led by the well known antiquary and poet, Mr. Joseph Train, that the usual account of its being 'founded in Mons, Flanders,' is errant, and that on the contrary 'this famous piece of artillery is a native of the land to which all its traditions belong.' Mr. Train establishes, that this huge piece of ordnance was presented to James II. in 1455, by the M'Lellans, when he arrived with an army at Carlingwark, to besiege William, Earl of Douglas, in the castle of Threave. The whole evidence will be found in 'Contemporaries of Burns,' Joseph Train, p. 200 sq.; and with additional notices in Mr. Wilson's Memorials, vol. i. p. 129; but, verily, the Life Character, Adventures, &c. of 'Meg,' which the vulgar literature of the last century would ludicrously illustrate, as in Watson's 'Ancient Scots Poems,' might form the subject-matter of a right merry Pasquil for our Scottish Walpole, Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe, Esq. Fergusson speaks of the 'cracking' of Meg's 'muckle mou' feloniously. From Fountainhall's 'Chronicles,' Note No. 1, we learn that it was "burst when firing a salute to James, Duke of York, on his visit to the castle, 1682."

Sax lang Scots miles ayont Clackmanan,[1]
And tak' his life.[2]

The hills in terror wou'd cry out,
And echo to thy dinsome rout;
The herds wou'd gather in their nowt,
That glowr'd wi' wonder,
Haflins afraid to bide thereout
To hear thy thunder.

Sing likewise, Muse, how blue-gown bodies,[3]
Like scar-craws new ta'en down frae woodies,

1 In the festivities celebrated at Edinburgh, by the Queen Dowager, Mary of Guise, on the marriage of her daughter, Queen Mary, to the Dauphin of France, Mons Meg testified, with loudest acclaim, the general joy. The treasurer's accounts curiously illustrate Fergusson:—"By the Queenis precept and speciale command, to certane pyonaris for thair lauboris in the mounting of Mons furth of her lair to be schote, and for the finding and carying of hir bullet after scho was schot, frae Weirdrie Mure, to the castell, of Edinburgh, &c." Wardie is fully two miles north from the castle, near Granton.

2 In the list of ordnance delivered by the governor to Colonel Monk, on the surrender of the castle in 1650, Meg receives, with all due prominence, the designation of "the great iron murderer, Muckle Meg."—*Provincial Antiquities*, p. 21.—*Wilson*, vol. i. p. 131.

3 Blue-gown, Bede-man, Beidman. In the court of Exchequer this term Bedeman is used to denote one of that class of paupers who enjoy the royal bounty. Each of these beidmen, annually, on the king's birth-day, receives a blue great-coat, or gown, as it is denominated, (whence the vulgar 'blue-gown,') with a badge which marks their privilege of begging; and at the same time a loaf of bread, a bottle of ale, a leathern purse, and in it a penny for every year of the king's life. Every birth-day another beidman or bluegown is added to the number, as a penny is added to the salary of each of them.—*Jamieson, Etym. Dict. in loc.* It will be recollected that Edie Ochiltree and Patie Birnie, of the latter of whom the editor has a characteristic portrait in his blue-gown, were of the fraternity. Interesting memoranda concerning the blue-gowns will be found in the letter-press to Kay, vol. ii., part 1, p. 264 sq. It gives me pleasure to be enabled to illustrate the gathering of these 'gentle' beggars as portrayed by Fergusson, from the 'Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time' by Mr. Daniel Wilson (vol. i. p. 189). It used to be, he says, "a very interesting sight, on a fine summer morning, between seven and eight o'clock, before the Canongate kirk bell began to ring for the appointed service, to see the strange groups of Blue-gowns of all ages, from forty-five to ninety and upwards, assembling in front of the kirk.

Come here to cast their clouted duddies,
And get their pay:
Than them, what magistrate mair proud is
On king's birth-day?

On this great day, the city-guard,[1]
In military art well lear'd,
Wi' powder'd pow, and shaven beard,
Gang thro' their functions,
By hostile rabble seldom spar'd
Of clarty unctions.

O soldiers! for your ain dear sakes,
For Scotland's, alias Land of Cakes,
Gie not her bairns sic deadly pakes,
Nor be sae rude,
Wi' firelock or Lochaber aix,[2]
As spill their blude.

Now round and round the serpents[3] whiz,
Wi' hissing wrath and angry phiz;

Venerable looking men, bent with the weight of years, some lame, others blind, led by a boy or a wife,—whose tartan or hodden gray told of the remote districts from whence they had come,—or perhaps by a rough Highland dog, looking equally strange on the streets of the ancient burgh; while all the old bede-men were clad in their monastic looking habits, and with large badges on their breasts. It was curious thus to see pilgrims from the remotest parts of Scotland and the Isles,—the men of another generation,—annually returning to the capital, and each contriving to arrive there on the very day of the king's birth and bounty."

1 See page 6, note 2.

2 The Town-guard of Edinburgh were, till a late period, armed with this weapon when on their police duty. There was a hook at the back of the axe, which the ancient Highlanders used to assist them to climb over walls, fixing the hook upon it, and raising themselves by the handle. The axe, which was also much used by the natives of Ireland, is supposed to have been introduced into both countries from Scandinavia.—*Scott,—Waverley, note*, p. 113. (*Abbotsford edition.*)

3 Fire-crackers—the delight of all mischievous boys. They leap to and fro upon the ground and explode again and again.

Sometimes they catch a gentle gizz,
Alake the day!
And singe, wi' hair-devouring bizz,
Its curls away.

Shou'd th' owner patiently keek round,
To view the nature of his wound,
Dead pussie, dragled thro' the pond,
Takes him a lounder,
Which lays his honour on the ground
As flat's a flounder.

The Muse maun also now implore
Auld wives to steek ilk hole and bore;
If baudrins slip but to the door,
I fear, I fear,
She'll no lang shank upon all-four
This time o' year.[1]

Next day each hero tells his news
O' crackit crowns and broken brows,
And deeds that here forbid the Muse
Her theme to swell,
Or time mair precious [to] abuse
Their crimes to tell.

She'll rather to the fields resort,
Whare music gars the day seem short,
Whare doggies play, and lambies sport
On gowany braes,
Whare peerless Fancy hads her court,
And tunes her lays.

1 See Additional Notes and Illustrations, B.

CALLER OYSTERS.

Happy the man who, free from care and strife,
In silken or in leathern purse, retains
A splendid shilling. He nor hears with pain
New oysters cry'd, nor sighs for chearful ale.
[JOHN] PHILLIPS;
(The exordium of the 'Splendid Shilling.')

Of a' the waters that can hobble
A fishin' yole or salmon coble,
And can reward the fisher's trouble,
Or south or north,
There's nane sae spacious and sae noble
As Firth o' Forth.

In her the skate and codlin sail,
The eil fou souple wags her tail,
Wi' herrin, flouk, and makarel,
And whitens dainty;
Their spindle-shanks the labsters trail
Wi' partans plenty.

Auld Reikie's sons blyth faces wear;
September's merry month is near,
That brings in Neptune's caller cheer,
New oysters fresh;
The halesomest and nicest gear
Of fish or flesh.

O! then we needna gi'e a plack
For dand'ring mountebank or quack,
Wha o' their drogs sae bauldly crack,
And spread sic notions,
As gar their feckless patients tak
Their stinkin potions.

Come prie, frail man! for gin thou art sick,
The oyster is a rare cathartic
As ever doctor patient gart lick
To cure his ails;
Whether you hae the head or heart ake,
It ay prevails.

Ye tiplers, open a' your poses,
Ye wha are faush'd wi' plouky noses,
Fling owr your craig sufficient doses,
You'll thole a hunder,
To fleg awa your simmer roses,
And naithing under.

Whan big as burns the gutters rin,
Gin ye hae catcht a droukit skin,
To Luckie Middlemist's[1] loup in,
And sit fu' snug
O'er oysters and a dram o' gin,
Or haddock lug.

When auld Saunt Giles, at aught o'clock,
Gars merchant louns their shopies lock,
There we adjourn wi' hearty fock
To birle our bodles,
And get wharewi' to crack our joke,
And clear our noddles.

Whan Phœbus did his windocks steek,
How aften at that ingle cheek

1 A famous Oyster Tavern in our Poet's time, situated in the Cowgate, where it is now (1851) crossed by the South Bridge, and which has more recently obtained a new lease of immortality (!) as the scene of some of the most graphic incidents in the 'Miller of Deanhaugh,' by the many-gifted Ballantyne.

Did I my frosty fingers beek,
And taste gude fare:
I trow there was nae hame to seek
Whan steghin there.

While glakit fools, o'er rife o' cash,
Pamper their weyms wi' fousom trash,
I think a chiel may gayly pass,
He's no ill boden
That gusts his gabb wi' oyster sauce,
And hen weel soden.

At Musselbrough, and eke Newheven,[1]
The fisher wives will get top livin,
When lads gang out on Sunday's even
To treat their joes,
And tak' o' fat pandours a prieven,
Or mussel brose:

Then sometimes ere they flit their doup,
They'll ablins a' their siller coup
For liquor clear frae cutty stoup,
To weet their wizen,
And swallow o'er a dainty soup,
For fear they gizzen.

A' ye wha canna stand sae sicker,
Whan twice you've toom'd the big-ars'd bicker,
Mix caller oysters wi' your liquor,
And I'm your debtor,
If greedy priest or drouthy vicar
Will thole it better.

1 Two well-known country towns not far from Edinburgh.

TO MR. ROBERT FERGUSSON.

Is Allan[1] risen frae the deid,
Wha aft has tun'd the aiten reed,
And by the muses was decreed
To grace the thistle?
Na; Fergusson's come in his stead
To blaw the whistle.

In troth, my callant, I'm sae fain
To see your sonsy, canty strain,
You write sic easy stile and plain,
And words sae bonny,
Nae suth'ron lown dare you disdain,
Or cry fy on ye!

Whae'er has at Auld Reikie been,
And king's birth-days exploits has seen,
Maun own that ye hae gi'en a keen
And true description;
Nor say ye've at Parnassus been
To form a fiction.

Hale be your heart, ye canty chield!
May ye ne'er want a gude warm beild,
And sic gude cakes as Scotland yields,
And ilka dainty
That grows or feeds upon her fields;
And whisky plenty.

But ye, perhaps, thirst mair for fame
Than a' the gude things I can name,

1 Ramsay.

And then ye will be sair to blame
My gude intention ;
For *that* ye needna gae frae hame,
Ye've sic pretension.

Sae saft and sweet your verses jingle,
And your auld words sae meetly mingle,
'Twill gar baith married fouk and single
To roose your lays ;
Whan we forgather round the ingle,
We'll chant your praise.

Whan I again Auld Reikie see,
And can forgather, lad, with thee,
Than we wi' muckle mirth and glee
Shall tak' a gill,
And o' your caller oysters we
Shall eat our fill.

If sic a thing shou'd you betide,
To Berwick town to tak a ride,
I'se tak ye up Tweed's bonnie side
Before ye settle,
And shew you there the fisher's pride,
A Sa'mon-kettle.[1]

There lads an' lasses do conveen
To feast an' dance upo' the green,
An' there sick brav'ry may be seen
As will confound ye,

1 The established or best mode of dressing salmon at the mouth of the Tweed is to put sea-water [salt] into the kettle, and boil the newly-caught fish therein. It is said by those who have tasted it that it is by far the best way to cook salmon.—*Mr. Robert Burns, Secundus.* [I suspect M. Soyer would dissent.]

An' gar ye glowr out baith your een
At a' around ye.

To see sae mony bosoms bare,
An' sic huge puddins i' their hair,
An' some of them wi' naithing mair
Upo' their tete;
Yea, some wi' mutches that might scar
Craws frae their meat.

I ne'er appear'd before in print,
But for your sake wou'd fain be in't,
E'en that I might my wishes hint
That you'd write mair;
For sure your head-piece is a mint
Whar wit's nae rare.

Sonse fa' me, gif I hadna 'lure [1]
I cou'd command ilk muse as sure,
Than hae a charot at the door
To wait upo' me;
Tho', poet-like, I'm but a poor
Mid-Louthian Johnnie.

J. S.

Berwick, Aug. 31. [1772.[2]]

1 'I would not rather,' as in Ramsay:

But I lure chuse in Highland glens
To herd the kid and goat, man,
Ere I cou'd for sic little ends
Refuse my bonny Scotman.

Songs, vol. ii. p. 250.

2 In every edition of Fergusson from Ruddiman's (1779: Part II. or supplement to the Author's own, 1773) onward, this letter is dated erroneously 1773. It appeared in the 'Weekly Magazine' (Vol. xvii: pp. 305-6) for September 5d. 1772: and the Poet's answer in the next Number, September 10th, 1772. See Life.

ANSWER TO MR. J. S.'s EPISTLE.

I TROW, my mettl'd Louden lathie,
Auld farran birky I maun ca' thee,
For whan in gude black print I saw thee
Wi' souple gab,
I skirl'd fou loud, "Oh wae befa' thee!
"But thou'rt a daub."

Awa', ye wylie fleetchin fallow!
The rose shall grow like gowan yallow,
Before I turn sae toom and shallow,
And void of fushion,
As a' your butter'd words to swallow
In vain delusion.

Ye mak my Muse a dautit pet,
But gin she cou'd like Allan's [1] met,
Or couthie crack and hamely get
Upo' her carritch,
Eithly wad I be in your debt
A pint o' parritch.

At times whan she may lowse her pack,
I'll grant that she can find a knack,
To gar auld-warld wordies clack
In hamespun rhime,
While ilk ane at his billie's back
Keeps gude Scots time.

But she maun e'en be glad to jook,
And play teet-bo frae nook to nook,

1 Ramsay.

Or blush as gin she had the yook
Upo' her skin,
Whan Ramsay [1] or whan Pennicuik [2]
Their lilts begin.

At morning ear, or late at e'en,
Gin ye sud hap to come and see ane,
Nor niggard wife, nor greetin wee ane,
Within my cloyster,
Can challenge you and me frae preein'
A caller oyster.

Heh lad! it wou'd be news indeed,
War I to ride to bonny Tweed,
Wha ne'er laid gamon o'er a steed
Beyont Lusterrick; [3]
And auld shanks nag [4] wou'd tire, I dread,
To pace to Berwick.

You crack weel o' your lasses there,
Their glancin' een and bisket bare;
But thof this town be smeekit sair,
I'll wad a farden,

1 Allan Ramsay.

2 There are two Pennicuiks both poets. 1st, Dr. Alexander Pennicuik, author of the 'Description of Tweedale' and of various racy poems. He was the friend of Ramsay,—died 1722. 2d, Alexander Pennicuik who in 1720 published 'Streams from Helicon,' and in 1726 'Flowers from Parnassus.' He wrote also an 'Historical account of the Blue Blanket, or Craftsman's Banner.' None of these poets are at all such as to make Fergusson blush.

3 Restalrig, an ancient village about a mile east from the Old town of Edinburgh, occupying the lower part of the vale which stretches from the sea-shore to Holyrood-house. It is curious that the vulgar Lusterrick preserves the proper ancient name more nearly than the polite, namely, Lestalric.

4 The feet,— to go on foot to Berwick. See Glossary *in loc.*

Than ours they're nane mair fat and fair,
Cravin your pardon.

Gin heaven shou'd gie the earth a drink,
And afterhend a sunny blink,
Gin ye war here, I'm sure you'd think
It worth your notice,
To see them dubbs and gutters jink
Wi' kiltit coaties.

And frae ilk corner o' the nation,[1]
We've lasses eke of recreation,
That at close-mou's tak' up their station
By ten o'clock.
The Lord deliver frae temptation
A' honest fock!

Thir queans are ay upo' the catch
For pursie, pocket-book, or watch,
And can sae glibb their leesins hatch,
That you'll agree,
Ye canna eithly meet their match
'Tween you and me.

For this gude sample o' your skill,
I'm restin you a pint o' yale,
By and attour a Highland gill
Of aquavitæ;
The which to come and sock at will,
I here invite ye.

Tho' jillet Fortune scoul and quarrel,
And keep me frae a bien beef barrel,

1 See "Auld Reekie," 'Near some lamp post, wi' dowy face,' &c.

As lang's I've two-pence i' the warl',
I'll ay be vockie
To part a fadge or girdle farl
Wi' Louthian Jockie.

Farewell, my cock! Lang may you thrive,
Weel happit in a cozy hive;
And that your soul may never dive
To Acheron,
I'll wish as lang's I can subscrive
ROB. FERGUSSON.

BRAID CLAITH.

[The poem of 'Braid Claith' expresses no doubt the touching experiences of the poet himself, as certainly it does of many similarly situated, who, conscious of genius, have nevertheless to endure, simply because they are "far in the shade, where poverty retires,"

> "The oppressor's wrong, the proud man's contumely,
> The pangs of despis'd love, the law's delay,
> The insolence of office, and the spurns
> That patient merit of the unworthy takes."
> HAMLET, Act III. Sc. 1.

But Fergusson, as a poet, might have comforted himself out of his favourite Gay, "The Muses, contrary to all other Ladies, pay no distinction to dress, and never partially mistake the pertness of embroidery for wit, or the modesty of want for dulness."—*The Beggar's Opera. Player in Introduction.*

Still, "hard is the poor poet's lot," for indeed the words of the same author are most true:

> "If poverty pass by in tatter'd coat
> Curs vex his heels * * *
> If chance he mingles in the female crowd
> Pride tosses high her head, scorn laughs aloud
> And wonders at the impudence of want.

How we admire the poor philosopher who in such circumstances said, "When a stranger treats me with want of respect, I console myself with the reflection that it is not myself that he slights but my old and shabby coat and shabby hat, which, to say truth, have no particular claim to adoration. So if my hat and coat choose to fret about it, let them: but it is nothing to me."]

Ye wha are fain to hae your name
Wrote in the bonny book of fame,
Let merit nae pretension claim
To laurel'd wreath,
But hap ye weel, baith back and wame,
In gude Braid Claith.

He[1] that some ells o' this may fa',[2]
An' slae black hat on pow like snaw,

1 *Var.* they.

2 This line elucidates an expression in Burns which is somewhat obscure, if left unexplained, as it is in all editions. 'He that some ells o' this may fa',' signifies that happens to possess or simply, possess. In Burns' noble song there is the following stanza:

A king can mak' a belted knight,
A marquis, duke, an' a' that;
But an honest man's aboon his might,
Gude faith, he mauna fa that.

Referring to the royal power to make marquis, duke, etc. Burns goes on to say—it should not be for the good of mankind did he possess the power of making an 'honest man.' No, exclaims he, 'Gude faith, he mauna fa' [possess] that' [power.]—*Communicated by Mr. Robert Burns, Secundus.* In Wood's Songs of Scotland (Vol. I. Appendix p. 167) the following explanation is given: "The meaning of the expression, 'he mauna fa' that,' is obscure. Jamieson's Dictionary does not explain the phrase, though the line is given. In common glossaries to Burns, the word 'fa' is explained by fall, lot. Neither of these would make sense in Burns' line. Try, attempt, venture, is evidently the only satisfactory meaning of 'fa' in that place. The expression occurs long before Burns' poetizing days, in the old song beginning, 'Tho' Geordie reigns in James's stead.' See the second volume of Ritson's 'Scottish Songs,' p. 104.

"The whigs think a' that weal is won,
But faith they ma' na' fa' that;"

or as Hogg, in the second series of his Jacobite Relics, p. 56, gives it, 'maunna fa' that.' Here the phrase is equally obscure as in Burns' song: but the meaning seems to be, 'they must not venture to believe.'

Bids bauld to bear the gree awa',
Wi' a' this graith,
Whan bienly clad wi' shell fu' braw
O' gude Braid Claith.

Waesuck for him wha has nae fek o't!
For he's a gowk they're sure to geck at,
A chield that ne'er will be respekit
While he draws breath,
Till his four quarters are bedeckit
Wi' gude Braid Claith.

On Sabbath-days the barber spark,
Whan he has done wi' scrapin wark
Wi' siller broachie in his sark,
Gangs trigly, faith!
Or to the Meadows[1] or the Park,[2]
In gude Braid Claith.

Weel might ye trow, to see them there,
That they to shave your haffits bare,
Or curl an' sleek a pickle hair,
Wud be right laith,
Whan pacing wi' a gawsy air
In gude Braid Claith.

If ony mettled stirrah grien
For favour frae a lady's ein,

Mr. Burns' explanation removes this *only* 'satisfactory meaning' in the place cited. However, 'venture, attempt,' *are* meanings, as in Beattie to Ross:

"We norlands manna *fa'*, To eat sae nice and gang sae bra'," &c.

1 A public-walk or promenade to the south of Edinburgh. There appeared in the Weekly Magazine, Vols. xix. p. 237: and xxiv. p. 78, two highly humorous accounts of the then visitors to the 'Meadows.'

2 The Queen's Park, another well-known promenade.

He mauna care for being seen
Before he sheath
His body in a scabbard clean
O' gude Braid Claith.

For, gin he come wi' coat threed-bare,
A feg for him she winna care,
But crook her bony mou' fu' sair,
An' scald him baith.
Wooers shou'd ay their travel spare
Without Braid Claith.

Braid Claith lends fouk an unco heese,
Makes mony kail-worms butter-flees,
Gies mony a doctor his degrees
For little skaith:
In short, you may be what you please
Wi' gude Braid Claith.

For thof ye had as wise a snout on,
As Shakespeare or Sir Isaac Newton,
Your judgment fouk wud hae a doubt on,
I'll tak' my aith,
Till they cou'd see ye wi' a suit on
O' gude Braid Claith. [1]

1 Now, if ye're ane o' warld's folk,
Wha rate the wearer by the cloak,
And sklent on poverty their joke,
Wi' bitter sneer,
Wi' you no friendship will I troke,
Nor cheap nor dear.
Burns to Kennedy, 1785.

AN ECLOGUE

TO THE MEMORY OF DR. WILLIAM WILKIE,

LATE PROFESSOR OF NATURAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.

Born 5th October 1721.—Died 10th October 1772.

[Dr. Wilkie was the hapless author of an Epic poem in nine books (founded on the story of the Epigoni in the Iliad,) which, to the confusion and dismay of the literary circles of the day, he named the Epigoniad. It passed through two editions, and received the praises of Hume; but the work was too inartistic and somnolent, and is now consigned, along with his volume of Fables, "to the tomb of all the Capulets." The *sough* of his eccentricities, however, has not yet departed from St. Andrews. It is still remembered, that his every-day street dress usually consisted of several flannel jackets, waistcoats, and top-coat, and over all a great-coat and gown; and that, from a dread of ague, he was wont to repose under only thirteen pair of blankets, with the carpet doubled up for a bed-cover, and a pair of blankets wrapped round his night-gown, &c. &c.: although perhaps the blankets of tradition increase in the ratio of Falstaff's Knights. Underneath this ungainly exterior there beat a warm, *human*, benevolent heart; nor has his worth as a man, nor his ability as a professor, ever been questioned.—Fergusson does not forget the 'success of Wilkie' as an agriculturist. He had cultivated with great skill a farm in the vicinity of St. Andrews; and we must go back, observes Mr. Chambers, "to the time when our fathers were contented to raise small patches of stunted corn here and there, on the uninclosed moor, in order to appreciate fully the enterprise which merited the youthful poet's compliment—

> Lang had the thristles and the dockans been
> In use to wag their taps upo' the green,
> Where now his bonny rigs delight the view,
> And thriving hedges drink the cauler dew."

His farm lies in the parish of Cameron. It was, and continues to be, called 'Morton,' but being now 'leased' along with the neighbouring farm of Cameron, the name is rarely mentioned.

While under grass, which it was for many years, it was called Wilkie's Parks. A very good proof of the Professor's enterprise and enthusiasm is, that although Morton lies four or five miles up in the muirs of Fife, he drove the street manure to it, a thing never done before to any ground however near St. Andrews, nor is it attempted at the present day. Wilkie had likewise a park of land nearer the 'ancient city' on the west, which still retains the name of 'Wilkie's Park,' although it is now in the hands of proprietors of another name, and has a house built upon it. He had likewise various other parks in the vicinage of St. Andrews.—*Communicated in substance by John Buddo, Esq., Writer, and John Buist, Esq., Banker, St. Andrews.*]

GEORDIE AND DAVIE.

GEORDIE.

Blaw saft, my reed, and kindly to my maen,
Weel may ye thole a saft and dowie strain;
Nae mair to you shall shepherds in a ring,
Wi' blythness skip, or lasses lilt an' sing;
Sic sorrow now maun sadden ilka eie,
An' ilka waefu' shepherd grieve wi' me.

DAVIE.

Wharefor begin a sad an' dowie strain,
Or banish lilting frae the Fifan plain?
Tho' simmer's gane, an' we nae langer view
The blades o' claver wat wi' pearls o' dew,[1]
Cauld winter's blackest blast we'll eithly cowr,
Our eldin's driven, an' our har'st is owr;
Our rucks fu' thick are stackit i' the yard,
For the Yule feast a sautit mart's prepar'd;

1 The dews that bob like diamonds clear
On bladit corn.
Rev. James Nicol.

The ingle-nook supplies the simmer fields,
An' aft as mony gleefu' moments yields.
Swyth man! fling a' your sleepy springs awa',
An' on your canty whistle gie's a blaw:
Blythness, I trow, maun lighten ilka eie,
An' ilka canty callant sing like me.

GEORDIE.

Na, na; a canty spring wad now impart
Just threefald sorrow to my heavy heart.
Thof to the weet my ripen'd aits had fawn,
Or shakewinds owr my riggs wi' pith had blawn,
To this I cou'd hae said, "I carena by,"
Nor fund occasion now my cheeks to dry.
Crosses like thae, or lake o' warld's gear,
Are naething whan we tyne a friend that's dear.
Ah! waes me for you, Willy! mony a day
Did I wi' you, on yon broom-thackit brae,
Hound aff my sheep, an' lat them careless gang
To harken to your cheery tale or sang;
Sangs that for ay, on Caledonia's strand,
Shall sit the foremost 'mang her tunefu' band.
I dream't yestreen his deadly wraith I saw
Gang by my ein as white's the driven snaw;
My colley, Ringie, youf'd an' yowl'd a' night,
Cour'd an' crap near me in an unco' fright,
I waken'd fley'd, an' shook baith lith an' limb;
A cauldness took me, an' my sight grew dim;
I kent that it forspak approachin' wae
When my poor doggie was disturbit sae.
Nae sooner did the day begin to dawn,
Than I beyont the know fu' speedy ran,
Whare I was keppit wi' the heavy tale
That sets ilk dowie sangster to bewail.

DAVIE.

An' wha on Fifan bents can weel refuse
To gie the tear o' tribute to his muse?—
Fareweel ilk cheery spring, ilk canty note,
Be daffin an' ilk idle play forgot;
Bring ilka herd the mournfu', mournfu' boughs,
Rosemary sad, and ever dreary yews;
Thae lat be steepit i' the saut, saut tear,
To weet wi' hallow'd draps his sacred bier,
Whase sangs will ay in Scotland be rever'd,
While slow-gawn owsen [1] turn the flow'ry swaird;
While bonny lambies lick the dews of spring,
While gaudsmen whistle, or while birdies sing.

GEORDIE.

'Twas na for weel-tim'd verse or sangs alane,
He bore the bell frae ilka shepherd swain.
Nature to him had gi'en a kindly lore,
Deep a' her mystic ferlies to explore:
For a' her secret workings he could gie
Reasons that wi' her principles agree.
Ye saw yoursell how weel his mailin thrave;
Ay better faugh'd an' snodit than the lave;
Lang had the thristles an' the dockans been
In use to wag their taps upo' the green,

1 Ouse or owse, an ox, which is still occasionally used in the plough in some of the shires of Scotland: and not unfrequently the 'oussen-bow,' a piece of curved wood which was put round the necks of oxen, as a sort of collar, to which the draught was fastened, is to be found kicking about the farm-steads of every shire,—relics of the olden time. Even so recently as Burns the ploughing owsen are introduced. Thus in 'My ain kind dearie, O,'

When o'er the hill the eastern star
Tells bughtin-time is near, my jo;
And owsen frae the furrow'd field
Return sae dowf and weary, O.

Whare now his bonny riggs delight the view,
An' thrivin' hedges drink the caller dew.[1]

DAVIE.

They tell me, Geordie, he had sic a gift
That scarce a starnie blinkit frae the lift,
But he wou'd some auld warld name for't find,
As gart him keep it freshly in his mind:
For this some ca'd him an uncanny wight;
The clash gaed round, "he had the second sight;"
A tale that never fail'd to be the pride
Of graunies spinnin' at the ingle side.

GEORDIE.

But now he's gane, an' Fame that, whan alive,
Seenil lats ony o' her vot'ries thrive,
Will frae his shinin' name a' motes withdraw,
And on her loudest trump his praises blaw.
Lang may his sacred banes untroubl'd rest!
Lang may his truff in gowans gay be drest!
Scholars and bards unheard of yet shall come,
And stamp memorials on his grassy tomb,
Which in yon antient kirkyard shall remain,
Fam'd as the urn that hads the Mantuan swain.

HALLOW-FAIR.

[A Market held in November in the outskirts of Edinburgh.]

At Hallowmas, whan nights grow lang,
And starnies shine fu' clear,

1 Dr. Wilkie had a farm near St. Andrews, in which he made remarkable improvements.—*F.* See introductory note.

Whan fock, the nippin cald to bang,
Their winter hap-warms wear,
Near Edinbrough a fair there hads,
I wat there's nane whase name is,
For strappin dames and sturdy lads,
And cap and stoup, mair famous
Than it that day.

Upo' the tap o' ilka lum
The sun began to keek,
And bid the trig made maidens come
A sightly joe to seek:
At Hallowfair, where browsters rare
Keep gude ale on the gantries,
And dinna scrimp ye o' a skair
O' kebbucks frae their pantries,
Fu' saut that day.

Here country John in bannet blue,
And eke his Sunday's claise on,
Rins after Meg wi' rokelay new,
And sappy kisses lays on;
She'll tauntin say, "Ye silly coof!
"Be o' your gab mair spairin',"
He'll tak the hint, and criesh her loof
Wi' what will buy her fairin',
To chow that day.

Here chapmen billies tak their stand,[1]
An' shaw their bonny wallies;
Wow, but they lie fu' gleg aff hand
To trick the silly fallows.

1 When chapman billies leave the street.
BURNS: *Tam o' Shanter.*

Heh, sirs! what cairds and tinklers come,
An' ne'er-do-weel horse-coupers,
An' spae-wives fenzying to be dumb,
Wi' a' siclike landloupers,
To thrive that day.

Here Sawny cries, frae Aberdeen,
"Come ye to me fa need:
The brawest shanks that e'er were seen
"I'll sell ye cheap an' guid,
"I wyt they are as protty hose
"As come frae weyr or leem;
"Here tak' a rug and shaw's your pose:
"Forseeth, my ain's but teem
"An' light this day."

Ye wives, as ye gang thro' the fair,
O mak your bargains hooly!
Of a' thir wylie louns beware,
Or fegs they will ye spulzie.
For fairn-year Meg Thamson got,
Frae thir mischievous villains,
A scaw'd bit o' a penny note,
That lost a score o' shillins
To her that day.

The dinlin drums alarm our ears,
The serjeant screechs fu' loud,
"A' gentlemen and volunteers
"That wish your country gude,
"Come here to me, and I sall gie
"Twa guineas and a crown,
"A bowl o' punch, that like the sea
"Will soum a lang dragoon
"Wi' ease this day."

Without, the cussers prance and nicker,
An' owr the ley-rig scud;
In tents the carles bend the bicker,
An' rant an' roar like wud.
Then there's sic yellowchin and din,
Wi' wives and wee-anes gablin,
That ane might true they war a-kin
To a' the tongues at Babylon,
Confus'd that day.

Whan Phœbus ligs in Thetis lap,
Auld Reikie gie's them shelter,
Whare cadgily they kiss the cap,
An' ca't round helter skelter.
Jock Bell gaed furth to play his freaks,
Great cause he had to rue it,
For frae a stark Lochaber aix
He got a clamihewit
Fu' sair that night.

"Ohon!" quo' he, "I'd rather be
"By sword or bagnet stickit,
"Than ha'e my crown or body wi'
"Sic deadly weapons nickit."
Wi' that he gat anither straik,
Mair weighty than before,
That gar'd his feckless body aik,
An' spew the reikin gore,
Fu' red that night.

He peching on the cawsey lay,
O' kicks and cuffs weel sair'd;
A Highland aith the serjeant ga'e
"She maun pe see our guard."

Out spak the weirlike corporal,
"Pring in ta drunken sot."
They trail'd him ben, an' by my saul,
He paid his drunken groat
For that neist day.

Good fock, as ye come frae the fair,
Bide yont frae this black squad;
There's nae sic canker'd pack[1] elsewhere
Allow'd to wear cockade.
Than the strong lion's hungry maw,
Or tusk o' Russian bear,
Frae their wanruly fellin' paw
Mair cause ye ha'e to fear
Your death that day.

A wee soup drink dis unco weel[2]
To had the heart aboon;
Its gude as lang's a canny chiel
Can stand steeve in his shoon.
But gin a birkie's owr weel saird
It gars him aften stammer
To pleys that bring him to the guard,
An' eke the Council-chawmir,
With shame that day.

1 *Var.* savages.

2 A wee drap whisky's unco gude;
It cheers the heart, an' warms the bluid,
An' puts our spirits in gude mood:
But tent neist verse:
Ow're muckle o't pits fo'k red-wud
An' sometimes warse.
—David Sillar: '*Whisky' Poems*, 1 vol. 8vo., 1789, Kilmarnock, p. 41.

TO THE TRON-KIRK BELL.

[The Tron Church, in the High Street of Edinburgh, was built in 1647, but not completely finished till 1663. Its bell, which cost 1,400 merks, or £82 10s. 2⅔d., was put up in 1673. This useful, but, if we are to believe Fergusson, unpleasant servant of the public, came to an untimely end, November 16, 1834, when, the steeple having caught fire in the midst of the wide-spread conflagration which then befell the city, the bell was melted by the flames, and fell in masses upon the floor below. Many citizens of Edinburgh [Sir Walter Scott, Lord Jeffrey, &c., &c.], from an affectionate regard for the object of Fergusson's whimsical vituperations, obtained pieces of the metal from which they formed cups, hand-bells, and other such utensils, with commemorative inscriptions. Such was the end of this "wanwordy, crazy, dinsome thing."—*Robert Chambers. Edition of Fergusson in loc.*]

Wanwordy, crazy, dinsome thing,
As e'er was fram'd to jow or ring,
What gar'd them sic in steeple hing
They ken themsel',
But weel wat I they coudna bring
War sounds frae hell.

What de'il are ye? that I shoud bann,
Your neither kin to pat nor pan;
Nor uly pig, nor maister-cann,
But weel may gie
Mair pleasure to the ear o' man
Than stroke o' thee.

Fleece merchants may look bald, I trow,
Since a' Auld Reikie's childer now
Maun stap their lugs wi' teats o' woo,
Thy sound to bang,

And keep it frae gawn thro' and thro'
Wi' jarrin' twang.

Your noisy tongue, there's nae abideint,
Like scaulding wife's, there is nae guideint:
Whan I'm 'bout ony bus'ness eident,
It's sair to thole;
To deave me, than, ye tak' a pride in't
Wi' senseless knoll.

O! war I provost o' the town,
I swear by a' the pow'rs aboon,
I'd bring ye wi' a reesle down;
Nor shud you think
(Sae sair I'd crack and clour your crown)
Again to clink.

For whan I've toom'd the muckle cap,
An' fain wad fa' owr in a nap,
Troth I coud doze as soun's a tap,
Wer't na for thee,
That gies the tither weary chap
To waukin me.

I dreamt ae night I saw Auld Nick;
Quo he, "this bell o' mine's a trick,
"A wylie piece o' politic,
"A cunnin snare
"To trap fock in a cloven stick,
"Ere they're aware.

"As lang's my dautit bell hings there,
"A' body at the kirk will skair;

"Quo they, gif he that preaches there
"Like it can wound,
"We douna care a single hair
"For joyfu' sound."

If magistrates wi' me wud' gree,
For ay tongue-tackit shud you be,
Nor fleg wi' anti-melody
Sic honest fock,
Whase lugs were never made to dree
Thy doolfu' shock.

But far frae thee the bailies dwell,
Or they wud scunner at your knell,
Gie the foul thief his riven bell,
And than, I trow,
The by-word hads, "the de'il himsel'
"Has got his due."

CALLER WATER.

Whan father Adie first pat spade in
The bonny yeard of antient Eden,
His amry had nae liquor laid in,
To fire his mou',
Nor did he thole his wife's upbraidin'
For being fou.

A caller burn o' siller sheen,
Ran cannily out o'er the green,
And whan our gutcher's drouth had been
To bide right sair,

He loutit down and drank bedeen
A dainty skair.[1]

His bairns a' before the flood
Had langer tack o' flesh and blood,
And on mair pithy shanks they stood
Than Noah's line,
Wha still hae been a feckless brood
Wi' drinking wine.

The fuddlin' Bardies now-a-days
Rin maukin-mad in Bacchus' praise,
And limp and stoiter thro' their lays
Anacreontic,
While each his sea of wine displays
As big's the Pontic.

My muse will no gang far frae hame,
Or scour a' airths to hound for fame;
In troth, the jillet ye might blame
For thinking on't,
Whan eithly she can find the theme
Of *aqua font.*

This is the name that doctors use
Their patients noddles to confuse;
Wi' simples clad in terms abstruse,
They labour still,

1 Hail! callor burn,! chief o' Scots drink!
To purchase thee we need nae clink:
Just lout out owre a burny's brink,
An' tak' our fill;
'Twill neither mak us glowr nor wink,
Like whisky gill.
—David Sillar. '*Whisky*' (1789).

In kittle words to gar you roose
Their want o' skill.

But we'll hae nae sick clitter-clatter,
And briefly to expound the matter,
It shall be ca'd good Caller Water,
Than whilk, I trow,
Few drogs in doctors' shops are better
For me or you.

Tho' joints are stiff as ony rung,
Your pith wi' pain be fairly dung,
Be you in Caller Water flung
Out o'er the lugs,
'Twill mak you souple, swack and young,
Withouten drugs.

Tho' cholic or the heart-scad teaze us,
Or ony inward pain should seize us,
It masters a' sic fell diseases
That would ye spulzie,
And brings them to a canny crisis
Wi' little tulzie.

Wer't na for it the bonny lasses
Would glowr nae mair in keeking glasses,
And soon tine dint o' a' the graces
That aft conveen
In gleefu' looks and bonny faces,
To catch our ein.

The fairest then might die a maid,
And Cupid quit his shooting trade,
For wha thro' clarty masquerade
Could than discover,

Whether the features under shade
Were worth a lover ?

As simmer rains bring simmer flow'rs
And leaves to cleed the birken bowers,
Sae beauty gets by caller show'rs,
Sae rich a bloom
As for estate, or heavy dow'rs
Aft stands in room.

What makes Auld Reikie's dames sae fair,
It canna be the halesome air,
But caller burn beyond compare,
The best of ony,
That gars them a' sic graces skair,
And blink sae bonny.

On May-day[1] in a fairy ring,
We've seen them round St. Anthon's[1] spring,

1 St. Anthony's Well, a beautiful small spring, on Arthur's Seat, near Edinburgh. Thither it is still the practice of young Edinburgh maidens to resort on May-day.—*Robert Chambers. Ed. of Fergusson*, 1 vol. 8vo., 1842, p. 11. *Note in loc.* I cannot refrain from doing myself the pleasure of inserting here the following tasteful lines, which are prefixed to Mr. Wilson's 'Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time.'

"A silver stream, as in the days of yore,
When the old hermit of the neighbouring cell
Bless'd the clear waters of St. Anton's Well;
And yon grey ruins, on whose grassy floor
The lambkins browse, rung out the matin bell.
Whose voice upon the neighbouring city fell
Waking up 'mong its crowds old hearts that wore
Griefs like our own: sounding to one the knell
Of ruined hopes, to which another heeds
As joyful music on his marriage morn.
Up yon steep cliff how oft light steps have borne
The wedding or the christening train: where weed
So long have grown, the chapel altar stood,
And daily pilgrims knelt before the Holy Rood.

Thus fashions change, while Nature is the same:
The altar gone,—the chapel's crumbling walls

Frae grass the caller dew draps wring,
To weet their ein,
And water clear as chrystal spring,
To synd them clean.

O may they still pursue the way
To look sae feat, sae clean, sae gay!
Than shall their beauties glance like May,
And, like her, be
The goddess of the vocal spray,
The Muse, and me.

MUTUAL COMPLAINT OF PLAINSTANES AND CAUSEY, IN THEIR MOTHER-TONGUE.

Since Merlin[1] laid Auld Reikie's causey,
And made her o' his wark right saucy,
The spacious street and gude plainstanes
Were never kend to crack but anes,

O'erlooking there the Stuarts' ancient halls,
Deserted all and drear: with but the fame
Of buried glories giving them a name;
Where yet the past as with a spell enthralls
The wanderer's fancy, rapt in musing dream
Of ancient story, helping it to frame
Old scenes in yon grey aisles, when mass was sung,
While Mary—hapless Queen—knelt low the while,
And thrilling chaunts and incense filled the aisle:—
Vain dream! of all that there so fondly clung,
Nought save the daisy and the blue harebell
Breathe their old incense by St. Anton's Well."

1 There is a tradition, says Robert Chambers, who seems to have a peculiar 'knack' for eliminating 'old traditions,' that, as noticed by Maitland, the High Street was first paved by a Frenchman named Marlin, from whom a wynd or alley near the Tron Church took its name, in consequence of his having been buried at the head of it under his own work. A peculiar arrangement of the stones, it is remembered, marked the spot where Merlin was understood to lie.

Whilk happened on the hinder night,
Whan Fraser's[1] ulie tint its light,
Of Highland sentries nane were waukin,
To hear thir cronies glibbly taukin;
For them this wonder might hae rotten,
And, like night robb'ry, been forgotten,
Had na' a cadie, wi' his lanthron,
Been gleg enough to hear them bant'rin,
Wha came to me neist morning early,
To gi'e me tidings o' this ferly.
Ye taunting lowns trow this nae joke,
For anes the ass of Balaam spoke,
Better than lawyers do, forsooth,
For it spake naething but the truth!
Whether they follow its example,
You'll ken best whan you hear the sample.

PLAINSTANES.

My friend, thir hunder years and mair,
We've been forfoughen late and air,
In sun-shine, and in weety weather,
Our thrawart lot we bure thegither.
I never growl'd, but was content
Whan ilk ane had an equal stent,
But now to flyte I'se e'en be bauld,
Whan I'm wi' sic a grievance thrall'd.
How haps it, say, that mealy bakers,
Hair-kaimers, crieshy gezy-makers,

1 Contractor for the lamps.—*F.* From the Council Register of 1554 we find that 'owing to the frequent robberies and assaults at night,' the Council ordered that year 'lanterns or bowets to be hung out in the streets and closes, by such persons and in such places as the magistrates should appoint, to continue burning from five o'clock in the evening till nine, which was judged a proper time for people to repair to their respective habitations.'—*Maitland*, p. 14. And thus nearly it continued 'till gas with brilliant blaze had shaded. The light of other days.'

Shou'd a' get leave to waste their powders
Upon my beaux and ladies shoulders?
My travellers are fley'd to deid
Wi' creels wanchancy, heap'd wi' bread,
Frae whilk hing down uncanny nicksticks,
That aften gie the maidens sic licks,
As make them blyth to skreen their faces
Wi' hats and muckle maun bon-graces
And cheat the lads that fain wad see
The glances o' a pauky eie,
Or gie their loves a wylie wink,
That erst might lend their hearts a clink!
Speak, was I made to dree the ladin
Of Gallic chairman heavy treadin,
Wha in my tender buke bore holes
Wi' waefu' tackets i' the soals
O' broags, whilk on my body tramp,
And wound like death at ilka clamp.

CAUSEY.

Weil crackit friend—It aft hads true,
Wi' naething fock make maist ado;
Weel ken ye, tho' ye doughtna tell,
I pay the sairest kain mysell;
Owr me ilk day big waggons rumble,
And a' my fabric birze and jumble;
Owr me the muckle horses gallop,
Enough to rug my very saul up;
And coachmen never trow they're sinning,
While down the street their wheels are spinning.
Like thee, do I not bide the brunt
O' Highland chairman's heavy dunt?
Yet I hae never thought o' breathing
Complaint, or making din for naething.

PLAINSTANES.

Had sae, and lat me get a word in,
Your back's best fitted for the burden;
And I can eithly tell you why,
Ye're doughtier by far than I;
For whin-stanes, howkit frae the craigs,[1]
May thole the prancing feet of naigs,
Nor ever fear uncanny hotches
Frae clumsy carts or hackney-coaches,
While I, a weak and feckless creature,
Am moulded by a safter nature.
Wi' mason's chissel dighted neat,
To gar me look baith clean and feat,
I scarce can bear a sairer thump
Than comes frae sole of shoe or pump.
I grant, indeed, that, now and than,
Yield to a paten's pith I maun;
But patens, tho' they're aften plenty,
Are ay laid down wi' feet fu tenty,
And stroaks frae ladies, tho' they're teazing,
I freely maun avow are pleasing.
For what use was I made, I wonder,
It was na tamely to chap under
The weight o' ilka codroch chiel,
That does my skin to targits peel;
But gin I guess aright, my trade is
To fend frae skaith the bonny ladies,
To keep the bairnies free frae harms
Whan airing in their nurses' arms,
To be a safe and canny bield
For growing youth or drooping eild.
Take then frae me the heavy load
O' burden-bearers heavy shod,

1 Salisbury Crags, part of Arthur's Seat, near Edinburgh.

Or, by my troth, the gude auld town shall
Hae this affair before their council.

CAUSEY.

I dinna care a single jot,
Tho' summon'd by a shelly-coat,
Sae leally I'll propone defences,
As get ye flung for my expences;
Your libel I'll impugn *verbatim*,
And hae a *magnum damnum datum;*
For tho' frae Arthur's-seat I sprang,
And am in constitution strang,
Wad it no fret the hardest stane
Beneath the Luckenbooths [1] to grane?
Tho' magistrates the Cross [2] discard,
It makes na whan they leave the Guard, [3]

1 Where Ramsay had his 'Shop' in which the first circulating library was established, and from which issued his peerless Pastoral and subsequently Burns's Poems, and many of the most celebrated works of the last century, from the press of Creech. The Luckenbooths consisted of a series of tenements which rose nearly to the height of the adjacent houses, built within a few yards of the church of St. Giles, headed at their western extremity by the Old Tolbooth of Edinburgh.—*Vide Arnot—Wilson—Chambers.*

2 The market-cross had been removed in 1752, as touchingly and with levin-fire lamented by Sir Walter Scott, at whose seat of Abbotsford the ornamental stones of it are still preserved.

Dun Edin's Cross, a pillar'd stone,
Rose on a turret octagon;
But now is razed that monument,
Whence royal edict rang,
And voice of Scotland's law was sent
In glorious trumpet clang.
O! be his tomb as lead to lead,
Upon its dull destroyer's head!—
A minstrel's malison is said.

MARMION, CANTO V. v. 25.

3 "The Guard-house was a long, low, ugly building (removed in 1787-8) which to a fanciful imagination might have suggested the idea of a long black snail crawling up the middle of the High Street, and deforming its beautiful esplanade."—SCOTT:—*Heart of Midlothian*, c. vi. A portrait of the Guard-house forms one of the curious Collection by Kay, No. CLXX. Edin. 2 vols. 4to.

A lumbersome and stinkin bigging,
That rides the sairest on my rigging.
Poor me owr meikle do ye blame,
For tradesmen tramping on your wame,
Yet a' your advocates and braw fock [1]
Come still to me 'twixt ane and twa clock,
And never yet were kend to range
At Charlie's Statue or Exchange. [2]
Then tak your beaux and macaronies
Gie me trades-fock and country Johnies;
The deil's in't gin ye dinna sign
Your sentiments conjunct wi' mine.

PLAINSTANES.

Gin we twa cou'd be as auld-farrant
As gar the council gie a warrant,
Ilk lown rebellious to tak,
Wha walks not in the proper track,
And o' three shilling Scottish suck him,
Or in the water-hole sair douk him;
This might assist the poor's collection,
And gie baith parties satisfaction.

CAUSEY.

But first, I think it will be good
To bring it to the Robinhood, [3]

1 There is an etching of Parliament Square by David Allan which exhibits all this 'gay procession' very graphically.

2 Two places were laid with plainstanes for the convenience of the merchants, who, however, could never be prevailed on to take advantage of them, but held to their old haunt on the 'causey' near the site of the Cross. The statue of Charles II. in Parliament Square is referred to. The Exchange is well known.

3 A new instituted society, held weekly in the Thistle Lodge, where the grand concerns of the nation are debated by a set of juvenile Ciceros. —*F.* A debating society where Claudero was wont to figure, subsequently called the Pantheon, and in which, it is worth while mentioning,

Whare we shall hae the question stated,
And keen and crabbitly debated,
Whether the provost and the baillies,
For the town's good whase daily toil is,
Shou'd listen to our joint petitions,
And see obtemper'd the conditions.

PLAINSTANES.

Content am I—But east the gate is
The sun, wha taks his leave of Thetis,
And comes to wauken honest fock,
That gang to wark at sax o'clock;
It sets us to be dumb a while,
And let our words gie place to toil.

THE RISING OF THE SESSION.

To a' men living be it kend,
The Session now is at an end:
Writers, your finger-nebbs unbend,
And quat the pen,
Till Time wi' lyart pow shall send
Blythe June again.[1]

Tir'd o' the law, and a' its phrases,
The wylie writers, rich as Crœsus,

Alexander Wilson, author of 'Watty and Meg' and other poems, and the illustrious ornithologist, delivered his celebrated poem of the 'Laurel Disputed' or the respective Claims of Ramsay and Fergusson, in which as if he had been impressed by the genius loci, for Fergusson was a distinguished member, he assigned the palm to our poet.—*See Poems.*

1 The Court of Session was opened in the time of Fergusson (1773) for the summer term on the 12th of June, instead of the 12th of May as at present (1850-1).

Hurl frae the town in hackney chaises,
For country cheer:
The powny that in spring-time grazes,
Thrives a' the year.

Ye lawyers, bid fareweel to lies,
Fareweel to din, fareweel to fees,
The canny hours o' rest may please
Instead o' siller:
Hain'd multer hads the mill at ease,
And finds the miller.

Blyth they may be wha wanton play
In fortune's bonny blinkin ray,
Fu' weel can they ding dool away
Wi' comrades couthy,
And never dree a hungert day,
Or e'ening drouthy.

Ohon the day for him that's laid,
In dowie poortith's caldrife shade,
Ablins o'er honest for his trade,
He racks his wits,
How he may get his buik weel clad,
And fill his guts.

The farmers' sons, as yap as sparrows,
Are glad, I trow, to flee the barras,
And whistle to the plough and harrows
At barley seed:
What writer wadna gang as far as
He cou'd for bread.

After their yokin, I wat weel
They'll stoo the kebbuck to the heel;

Eith can the plough-stilts gar a chiel
Be unco vogie,
Clean to lick aff his crowdy-meal,
And scart his cogie.

Now mony a fallow's dung adrift
To a' the blasts beneath the lift,
And tho' their stamack's aft in tift
In vacance time,
Yet seenil do they ken the rift
O' stappit weym.

Now gin a Notar shou'd be wanted,
You'll find the pillars[1] gayly planted;
For little thing protests are granted
Upo' a bill,
And weightiest matters covenanted
For half a gill.

Nae body takes a morning dribb
O' Holland gin frae Robin Gibb;
And tho' a dram to Rob's mair sib
Than is his wife,
He maun take time to daut his Rib
Till siller's rife.

1 An arcade which skirted the passage leading into the Parliament Close—a great haunt of 'low writers' as indicated. The great fire of 1824 destroyed the range of buildings which were fronted by the pillars; but all is preserved in the somewhat rare print of the 'Tron Kirk and adjoining buildings' by Parr after Elphinstone. It was under the 'pillars' that Claudero's 'Miser' took refuge—

"In below the pillars glowr,
You'll never miss him in a showr."

Poems, Desoription of Notar Creesh, p. 22.

2 He was a keeper of a tavern in the Outer House, as the old Parliament hall of Edinburgh is denominated, to distinguish it from the Inner House, where the fifteen lords sat in judgment. This Outer House, like Westminster Hall in old times, was then partly occupied by a range of little shops. See that entertaining and excellent little work by Robert Chambers, entitled 'Reekiana, or Minor Antiquities of Edinburgh.'

This vacance is a heavy doom
On Indian Peter's coffee-room,[1]
For a' his china pigs are toom;
Nor do we see
In wine the sucker biskets soom
As light's a flee.

But stop, my Muse, nor make a main,
Pate disna fend on that alane;[1]
He can fell twa dogs wi' ae bane,
While ither fock
Maun rest themselves content wi' ane,
Nor farer trock.

Ye change-house keepers never grumble,
Tho' you a while your bickers whumble,
Be unco patientfu' and humble,
Nor mak' a din,
Tho' gude joot binna kend to rumble
Your weym within.

You needna grudge to draw your breath
For little mair than half a reath,[2]

1 Peter Williamson, who, like Robin Gibb, kept a small tavern in the Outer House. He was one of the notabilities of Edinburgh, having been kidnapped in his boyhood from Aberdeen, and sold to a planter in the American colonies. He lived for several years among the Indians, whose dresses and customs he afterwards exhibited before the citizens of Edinburgh. Most truly does Fergusson say, "Pate disna fend on that alane." In addition to his tavern he was a pre-Rowland Hill, having established a penny post in the capital; and published a Street Directory. Moreover, we have seen his imprint on an edition of Sir David Lindsay's Poems, and have in our possession a quaint advertisement of 'Porter, etc., etc.' There is a portrait of him in Kay in conversation with Bruce, the Abyssinian traveller. No. LIX. Vol. I. Pt. I. p. 128 sq.

2 'Reath' is a public-house (tavern) measure for liquors—used perhaps only in the taverns then immediately adjoining Parliament Square. I do not know the size of the measure, but from the (above) context, it must be a small one. Long disused, and not given in Jamieson.—*Com-*

Than, gin we a' be spar'd frae death,
We'll gladly prie
Fresh noggans o' your reaming graith
Wi' blythsome glee.

THE SITTING OF THE SESSION.

Phœbus, sair cow'd wi' simmer's hight, [1]
Cours near the yird wi' blinking light;
Cauld shaw the haughs, nae mair bedight
Wi' simmer's claes,
They heeze the heart o' dowy wight
That thro' them gaes.

Weel lo'es me o' you, business, now;
For ye'll weet mony a drouthy mou',
That's lang a eisning gane for you,
Withouten fill
O' dribbles frae the gude brown cow,
Or Highland gill.

The Court o' Session, weel wat I,
Pitts ilk chiel's whittle i' the pye,
Can criesh the slaw-gaun wheels whan dry,
Till Session's done,
Tho' they'll gie mony a cheep and cry
Or twalt o' June.

municated by Mr. Robert Burns, Secundus. [It is transferred by Fergusson to time: you need not "grudge so short a period."]

1 The winter 'session' was then (1773) opened on the 12th of November. 'The Last Sitting of the Old Court of Session' is the subject of one of Kay's curious etchings. (No. CXXX.)

Ye benders a', that dwall in joot,
You'll tak your liquor clean cap out,
Synd your mouse-wabbs wi' reaming stout,
While ye ha'e cash,
And gar your cares a' tak the rout,
An' thumb ne'er fash.

Rob Gibb's[1] grey gizz, new frizzl'd fine,
Will white as ony snaw-ba' shine;
Weel does he lo'e the lawen coin
Whan dossied down,
For whisky gills or dribbs of wine
In cauld forenoon.

Bar-keepers now, at outer door,[2]
Tak tent as fock gang back and fore:
The fient ane there but pays his score,
Nane wins toll-free,
Tho' ye've a cause the house before,
Or agent be.

Gin ony here wi' canker knocks,
And has na lous'd his siller pocks,
Ye need na think to fleetch or cox;
"Come, shaw's your gear;
"Ae scabbit yew spills twenty flocks,
"Ye's no be here."

Now at the door they'll raise a plea;
Crack on, my lads!—for flyting's free
For gin ye shou'd tongue-tacket be,
The mair's the pity,
Whan scalding but and ben we see
Pendente lite.

1 See Note 2, page 52. 2 Ibid

The lawyer's skelfs, and printer's presses,
Grain unco sair wi' weighty cases;
The clark in toil his pleasure places,
To thrive bedeen;
At five-hour's bell scribes shaw their faces,
And rake their ein.

The country fock to lawyers crook,
"Ah! Weels me on your bonny buik!
"The benmost part o' my kist nook
"I'll ripe for thee,
"And willing ware my hindmost rook
"For my decree."

But Law's a draw-well unco deep,
Withouten rim fock out to keep;
A donnart chiel, whan drunk, may dreep
Fu' sleely in,
But finds the gate baith stay and steep,
Ere out he win.

ODE TO THE BEE.

Herds, blythsome tune your canty reeds,
An' welcome to the gowany meads
The pride o' a' the insect thrang,
A stranger to the green sae lang,
Unfald ilk buss and ilka brier,
The bounties o' the gleesome year,
To him whase voice delights the spring,
Whase soughs the saftest slumbers bring.
The trees in simmer-cleething drest,
The hillocks in their greenest vest.

The brawest flow'rs rejoic'd we see,
Disclose their sweets, and ca' on thee,
Blythly to skim on wanton wing
Thro' a' the fairy haunts of spring.
Whan fields ha'e got their dewy gift,
And dawnin breaks upo' the lift,
Then gang ye're wa's thro' hight and how,
Seek cauler haugh or sunny know,
Or ivy'd craig or burnbank brae,
Whare industry shall bid ye gae,
For hiney or for waxen store,
To ding sad poortith frae your door.
Cou'd feckless creature, man, be wise,
The simmer o' his life to prize,
In winter he might fend fu' bald,
His eild unkend to nippin cald,
Yet thir, alas! are antrin fock
That lade their scape wi' winter stock.
Auld age maist feckly glowrs right dour
Upo' the ailings of the poor,
Wha hope for nae comforting, save
That dowie dismal house, the grave.
Then feeble man, be wise, take tent
How industry can fetch content,
Behad the bees whare'er they wing,
Or thro' the bonny bow'rs of spring,
Whare vi'lets or whare roses blaw,
And siller dew-draps nightly fa',
Or whan on open bent they're seen,
On heather-bell or thristle green;
The hiney's still as sweet that flows
Frae thristle cald or kendling rose.
Frae this the human race may learn
Reflection's hiney'd draps to earn.

Whether they tramp life's thorny way,
Or through the sunny vineyard stray.
Instructive bee! attend me still,
O'er a' my labours sey your skill:
For thee shall hiney-suckles rise,
With lading to your busy thighs,
And ilka shrub surround my cell,
Whareon ye like to hum and dwell:
My trees in bourachs o'er my ground
Shall fend ye frae ilk blast o' wind;
Nor e'er shall herd, wi' ruthless spike,
Delve out the treasures frae your bike,
But in my fence be safe, and free
To live, and work, and sing like me.
Like thee, by fancy wing'd, the Muse
Scuds ear' and heartsome o'er the dews,
Fu' vogie, and fu' blyth to crap
The winsome flow'rs frae Nature's lap
Twining her living garlands there,
That lyart time can ne'er impair.

THE FARMER'S INGLE.

Et multo in primis hilarans convivia Baccho,
Ante focum, si frigus erit, [si messis, in umbra.
Vina novum fundum calateris Ariusia nectar.]
VIRGIL. BUC: [v. 39—71.] [1]

WHAN gloming [2] grey out o'er the welkin keeks,
Whan Batie ca's his owsen to the byre,

1 And chiefly enlivening the feast with plenty of the joys of Bacchus, before the fire [ingle], if it be cold [winter], if harvest [reaping-time], in the shade, I will pour thee forth Chian wines luscious as nectar.—*Trans.*

2 The second stanza of Burns's 'Cotter's Saturday Night,' it will be seen, bears a considerable resemblance, in thought and expression, to the opening of the 'Farmer's Ingle.

Whan Thrasher John, sair dung, his barn-door steeks,
And lusty lasses at the dighting tire:
What bangs fu' leal the e'enings coming cauld,
And gars snaw-tapit winter freeze in vain:
Gars dowie mortals look baith blyth and bauld,
Nor fley'd wi' a' the poortith o' the plain;
Begin my Muse, and chant in hamely strain.

Frae the big stack, weel winnow't on the hill,
Wi' divets theekit frae the weet and drift,
Sods, peats, and heath'ry trufs the chimley fill,
And gar their thick'ning smeek salute the lift;
The gudeman, new come hame, is blyth to find,
Whan he out o'er the halland flings his een,
That ilka turn is handled to his mind,
That a' his housie looks sae cosh and clean;
For cleanly house looes he, tho' e'er sae mean.

Weel kens the gudewife that the pleughs require
A heartsome meltith, and refreshing synd

November chill blaws loud wi' angry sugh;
The short'ning winter-day is near a close;
The miry beasts retreating frae the pleugh;
The black'ning trains o' craws to their repose;
The toil-worn Cotter frae his labour goes,
This night his weekly moil is at an end,
Collects his spades, his mattocks and his hoes,
Hoping the morn in ease and rest to spend,
And, weary, o'er the moor his course does hameward bend.

With reference to the word 'gloming' or 'gloamin,' it is certainly a very picturesque and mellifluous one. Byron appends an interesting note concerning it, to his 'Elegy on Newstead Abbey,' into which he had thus introduced it,

Where now the bats their wavering wings extend
Soon as the gloaming spreads her waning shade.
Stanza ix.

"As 'gloaming,' the Scottish word for twilight," says he, "is far more poetical and has been recommended by many eminent literary men, particularly by Dr. Moore in his letters to Burns, I have ventured to use it on account of its harmony."

O' nappy liquor, o'er a bleezing fire:
Sair wark and poortith douna weel be join'd.
Wi' butter'd bannocks now the girdle reeks,
I' the far nook the bowie briskly reams;
The readied kail stand by the chimley cheeks,
And had the riggin het wi' welcome steams,
Whilk than the daintiest kitchen nicer seems.

Frae this lat gentler gabs a lesson lear;
Wad they to labouring lend an eidant hand,
They'd rax fell strang upo' the simplest fare,
Nor find their stamacks ever at a stand.
Fu' hale and healthy wad they pass the day,
At night in calmest slumbers dose fu' sound,
Nor doctor need their weary life to spae,
Nor drogs their noddle and their sense confound,
Till death slip sleely on, and gi'e the hindmost wound.

On sicken food has mony a doughty deed
By Caledonia's ancestors been done;
By this did mony a wight fu' weirlike bleed
In brulzies frae the dawn to set o' sun:
'Twas this that brac'd their gardies, stiff and strang,
That bent the deidly yew in antient days,
Laid Denmark's daring sons on yird alang,
Gar'd Scottish thristles bang the Roman bays;
For near our crest their heads they doughtna raise.[1]

1 CALEDONIA *loq.*

The Gothes, the Danes, the Saxons here did feele,
And Normanes fierce, the fury of my steele;
Here Cæsar pitcht his tent, and proudly thought
His trophees o're our tombes to Rome have brought,
But all in vaine: his conquering hand was stayed,
And by his troupes a wall dividing layed
At Caron's bankes.

DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN. *Mait. Club. Ed. p.* 283.

The couthy cracks begin whan supper's o'er,
  The cheering bicker gars them glibly gash
O' simmer's showery blinks and winters sour,
  Whase floods did erst their mailins produce hash:
'Bout kirk and market eke their tales gae on,
  How Jock woo'd Jenny here to be his bride,
And there how Marion, for a bastard son,
  Upo' the cutty-stool was forced to ride,
  The waefu' scald o' our Mess John to bide.

The fient a chiep's amang the bairnies now;
  For a' their anger's wi' their hunger gane:
Ay maun the childer, wi' a fastin mou',
  Grumble and greet, and make an unco mane,
In rangles round before the ingle's low:
  Frae gudame's mouth auld warld tale they hear,
O' warlocks, louping round the wirrikow,
  O' gaists that win in glen and kirk-yard drear,
  Whilk touzles a' their tap, and gars them shak wi' fear.

For weel she rows that fiends and fairies be
  Sent frae the de'il to fleetch us to our ill;
That ky hae tint their milk wi' evil eie,
  And corn been scowder'd on the glowing kill.
O mock na this, my friends! but rather mourn,
  Ye in life's brawest spring wi' reason clear,
Wi' eild our idle fancies a' return,
  And dim our dolefu' days wi' bairnly fear;
  The mind's ay cradled whan the grave is near.

Yet thrift, industrious, bides her latest days,
  Tho' age her sair dow'd front wi' runcles wave,
Yet frae the russet lap the spindle plays,
  Her e'enin stent reels she as weel's the lave.

On some feast-day, the wee-things buskit braw
Shall heeze her heart up wi' a silent joy,
Fu' cadgie that her head was up and saw
Her ain spun cleething on a darling oy,
Careless tho' death should make the feast her foy.

In its auld lerroch [1] yet the deas [1] remains,
Whare the gudeman aft streeks him at his ease,
A warm and canny lean for weary banes,
O' lab'rers doil'd upo' the wintry [2] leas.
Round him will badrins and the colly come,
To wag their tail, and cast a thankfu' eie
To him wha kindly flings them mony a crum
O' kebbock whang'd, and dainty fadge to prie;
This a' the boon they crave, and a' the fee.

Frae him the lads their morning counsel tak,
What stacks he wants to thrash, what rigs to till,
How big a birn maun lie on bassie's back,
For meal and multure to the thirling mill.
Niest the gudewife her hireling damsels bids
Glowr thro' the byre, and see the hawkies bound,
Take tent case Crummy tak her wonted tids,
And ca' the laiglen's treasure on the ground,
Whilk spills a kebbuck nice, or yellow pound.

Then a' the house for sleep begin to grien,
Their joints to slack frae industry a while;
The leaden god fa's heavy on their ein,
And hafflins steeks them frae their daily toil;

1 *Lerroch*, site, place. *Deas*, a long wooden settle or seat. It will be remembered by readers of Scott that David Deans was seated on the deas or turf-seat, at the end of the cottage, when Middleburgh paid him the memorable visit concerning Effie.

2 *Var.* weary.

The cruizy too can only blink and bleer,
The restit ingle's done the maist it dow;[1]
Tacksman and cottar eke to bed maun steer,
Upo' the cod to clear their drumly pow,
Till wauken'd by the dawning's ruddy glow.

Peace to the husbandman and a' his tribe,
Whase care fells a' our wants frae year to year;
Lang may his sock and couter turn the gleyb,
And bauks o' corn bend down wi' laded ear.
May Scotia's simmers ay look gay and green,
Her yellow har'sts frae scowry blasts decreed;
May a' her tenants sit fu' snug and bien,
Frae the hard grip of ails and poortith freed,
And a lang lasting train o' peaceful hours succeed.

SONG.—THE 'LEA-RIG.'

[This excellent 'Song has long been fugitively known to have been written by Fergusson, but was only positively affirmed to be so by Mr. Laing in his invaluable Notes to the 'Museum' on the authority of the Herd MSS., and which I am authorized to repeat. In his notes on the 'Scottish Songs' in the 'Museum' Burns says in reference to these words, "that they were mostly composed by poor Fergusson in one of his merry humours." The 'mostly' respects the refrain of the older words, a fragment of which Burns has preserved.

I'll rowe thee o'er the lea-rig
My ain kind dearie, O;
I'll rowe thee o'er the lea-rig
My ain kind dearie, O,
Altho' the night were ne'er sae wat,
And I were ne'er sae weary, O,

1 Auld wives kindle up their ingles
To last till ten.
ALEX. PENNICUIK. *Merry Wives of Musselburgh's welcome to Mary Dickson.*

I'll rowe thee o'er the lea-rig
My ain kind dearie, O.

These two 'stanzas' Burns gives as the 'beginning' of the 'old words' which he states are omitted in the Museum, 'though much more beautiful than these inserted,' namely Fergusson's. We have both before us, and for ourselves must dissent from the usually correct dictum of the Ayrshire Poet. We do not conceive the fragment to be in any respect 'much more beautiful.' There is a version according to Motherwell and a certain ballad collector in the 'north countrie' entitled the 'Warehorse:' but it could not be that to which Burns alluded, as appears to be supposed by a tasteful writer in the Renfrewshire Magazine' for December 1846, as his 'fragment' [the above] does not correspond to these so called recovered words' of a great-grand-mother, which certainly Burns would have been the last to praise. Burns wrote the beautiful words 'When o'er the hill the eastern star' to this air: but they have not displaced those of Fergusson, which are usually sung along with the additional stanzas by Mr. William Reid of Glasgow, of inferior merit. In Wood's 'Songs of Scotland, [Vol. I. p. 143] these 'additions' of Reid are appended to those of Burns, while Fergusson's is dismissed thus: "Fergusson's song, of which they [Reid's] were intended to be a continuation, is scarcely fit for insertion here." What! Ye gods and little fishes! after Reid's, and after the worse than contemptible rhymes substituted throughout the work, on the principle that all "one's own geese are swans," for greatly superior old words. As 'scarcely fit' might be interpreted as an inuendo, I could not refrain from noticing it. I give the 'Song' of Fergusson's as it was inserted by Burns in Johnson's Scots Musical Museum, [49, p. 50. Vol. I. Note 49, p. 53.] to the old melody which, with a 'jig' on the same subject, appear in Oswald.]

Will ye gang o'er the lee-rig,
my ain kind deary, O!
And cuddle their sae kindly,
wi' me, my kind deary O!
At thornie dike and birken tree,
we'll daff, and ne'er be weary O;

They'll scug ill een frae you and me,
mine ain kind deary O!

Nae herds wi' kent, or colly there,
Shall ever come to fear ye-O;
But lav'rocks, whistling in the air,
Shall woo, like me, their deary-O!
While others herd their lambs and ewes,
And toil for warld's gear, my jo,
Upon the lee my pleasure grows,
Wi' you, my kind deary-O!

THE GHAISTS: A KIRK-YARD ECLOGUE.

[The interlocutors in this poem are 'George Herriot' and 'George Watson,' who founded the well-known institutions in Edinburgh for the support and education of the sons of decayed citizens. These institutions, which are known respectively by the name of their founders, are immediately adjacent to Greyfriars Churchyard. The subject-matter of the 'debate' or 'flyting' gave rise, at the time, to a grievous paper-war, in which much ink was shed. The 'poem' gives the gist of it: but the reader who is valiant enough will find full particulars in the collected pamphlets, squibs, &c. &c., of the period; and in the different well-known Lives of Herriot and Watson, by Dr. Steven and others.]

Did you not say, on good Ann's day,
And vow and did protest, Sir,
That when Hanover should come o'er
We surely should be blest, Sir?
An auld sang made new again.

WHARE the braid planes in dowy murmurs wave
Their antient taps out o'er the cauld-clad grave,
Whare Geordie Girdwood,[1] mony a lang-spun day,
Houkit for gentlest banes the humblest clay,

1 The late sexton.—*F.* 'Geordie' Girdwood was the most remarkable member of the remarkable fraternity of the grave-diggers of Edinburgh.

Twa sheeted ghaists, sae grizly and sae wan,
'Mang lanely tombs their douff discourse began.

WATSON.

Cauld blaws the nippin north wi' angry sough,
And showers his hailstanes frae the Castle Cleugh
O'er the Grayfriars, whare, at mirkest hour,
Bogles and spectres wont to tak their tour,
Harlin' the pows and shanks to hidden cairns,
Amang the hamlocks wild, and sun-burnt fearns,
But nane the night save you and I hae come
Frae the dern mansions of the midnight tomb.
Now whan the dawning's near, whan cock maun craw,
And wi' his angry bougil gar's withdraw,
Ayont the kirk we'll stap, and there take bield,
While the black hours our nightly freedom yield.

HERRIOT.

I'm weel content; but binna cassen down,
Nor trow the cock will ca' ye hame o'er soon,
For tho' the eastern lift betakens day,
Changing her rokely black for mantle grey,
Nae weirlike bird our knell of parting rings,
Nor sheds the caller moisture frae his wings.
Nature has chang'd her course; the birds o' day
Dosin' in silence on the bending spray,
While owlets round the craigs at noon-tide flee,
And bludy hawks sit singand on the tree.

He was a more than ordinarily drunken-looking, withered, unearthly, little old man, with sore eyes. Truly has Fergusson said that 'Geordie' 'houkit for gentlest banes' for 'mony a lang-spun day.' It was told of him that in the course of his professional duties, he had turned over Greyfriars churchyard seven times. He has long 'rested there himself.' The Scottish 'Jest-Books' contain many of his wild, 'rough, rude, ready-witted' sayings.

Ah, Caledon! the land I yence held dear,
Sair mane mak I for thy destruction near;
And thou, Edina! anes my dear abode,
Whan royal Jamie sway'd the sovereign rod,
In thae blest days, weel did I think bestow'd,
To blaw thy poortith by wi' heaps o' gowd;
To mak thee sonsy seem wi' mony a gift,
And gar thy stately turrets speel the lift:
In vain did Danish Jones,[1] wi' gimcrack pains,
In Gothic sculpture fret the pliant stanes:
In vain did he affix my statue here,
Brawly to busk wi' flow'rs ilk coming year;[2]
My tow'rs are sunk, my lands are barren now,
My fame, my honour, like my flow'rs maun dow.

WATSON.

Sure Major Weir,[3] or some sic warlock wight,
Has flung beguilin' glamer o'er your sight;
Or else some kittle cantrup thrown, I ween,
Has bound in mirlygoes my ain twa ein,
If ever aught frae sense cou'd be believ'd
(And seenil hae my senses been deceiv'd),

1 Inigo Jones is supposed to have designed 'Heriot's Hospital.' See the excellent Life of Jones recently written by the gifted son of Allan Cunningham, Mr. Peter Cunningham of Somerset House.

2 It was usual to 'busk wi' flowers' the statue of Heriot on his recurring birthday: and it is to this that, somewhat round-aboutly, Fergusson makes him allude.

3 Weir was a celebrated wizard in his 'day and generation,' and like the 'black' fraternity went so far as to get himself hanged in 1678 therefor. The spot, say Chambers and Wilson, on which he was burned, on the sloping bank of Greenside, has been rescued recently from all profane associations by the erection of New Lady Glenorchy's Chapel thereon. Various memorials of this wizard, who by the way acquired his title of Major, as did the notorious Porteous that of Captain, from being an officer of that rank in the City-Guard, will be found scattered throughout Scott's 'Demonology,' Wilson, Chambers, and Geikie, in the last of which, Vedder, lacking however his wonted 'birr,' supplies an odd poem descriptive of the 'notions respecting his warlock doings.' [No. xxiv, Head of the Westbow.]

This moment, o'er the tap of Adam's tomb,[1]
Fu' easy can I see your chiefest dome:
Nae corbie fleein' there, nor crouping craws,
Seem to forspeak the ruin of thy haws,
But a' your tow'rs in wonted order stand,
Steeve as the rocks that hem our native land.

HERRIOT.

Think na I vent my well-a-day in vain,
Kent ye the cause, ye sure wad join my mane.
Black be the day[2] that e'er to England's ground
Scotland was eikit by the Union's bond;
For mony a menzie of destructive ills
The country now maun brook frae mortmain bills,
That void our test'ments, and can freely gie
Sic will and scoup to the ordain'd trustee,
That he may tir our stateliest riggins bare,
Nor acres, houses, woods, nor fishins spare,
Till he can lend the stoitering state a lift
Wi' gowd in gowpins as a grassum gift;
In lieu o' whilk, we maun be weel content
To tyne the capital at three per cent.
A doughty sum indeed, whan now-a-days
They raise provisions as the stents they raise,

1 This is a conspicuous Mausoleum in Greyfriars churchyard belonging to the family of William Adam of Maryborough, architect, father of the somewhat celebrated Robert and James Adam, likewise architects.

2 The manner in which the 'pact' or Union was proceeded with, certainly shall ever leave a stain upon the Scottish nobility. All gloomy forebodings and anticipations have happily been dissipated, still, placing ourselves in the circumstances of those who had felt the indignities of England, and who proudly gloried in the nation's hard-won independence, we cannot but have the deepest sympathy with illustrious patriots like Belhaven and Fletcher, who saw nothing but blackness and calamity in the 'eiking' of the two kingdoms: nor indeed can I help yet feeling that the gradual system of centralization in London, of all our important national institutions, is a matter against which Scotchmen ought, as one, to lift up a stalwart protesting voice.

Yoke hard the poor, and lat the rich chiels be,
Pamper'd at ease by ither's industry.
Hale interest for my fund can scantly now
Cleed a' my callants' backs, and stap their mou'.
How maun their weyms wi' sairest hunger slack,
Their duds in targets flaff upo' their back,
Whan they are doom'd to keep a lasting Lent,
Starving for England's weel at three per cent.

WATSON.

Auld Reikie than may bless the gowden times,
Whan honesty and poortith baith are crimes;
She little kend, when you and I endow'd
Our hospitals for back-gaun burghers gude,
That e'er our siller or our lands should bring
A gude bien living to a back-gaun king,
Wha, thanks to ministry! is grown sae wise,
He douna chew the bitter cud of vice;
For gin, frae Castlehill to Netherbow,
Wad honest houses baudy-houses grow,
The crown wad never spier the price o' sin,
Nor hinder younkers to the de'il to rin;
But gif some mortal grien for pious fame,
And leave the poor man's pray'r to sain his name,
His geer maun a' be scatter'd by the claws
O' ruthless, ravenous, and harpy laws.
Yet, shou'd I think, altho' the bill tak place,
The council winna lack sae meikle grace
As lat our heritage at wanworth gang,
Or the succeeding generations wrang
O' braw bien maintenance and walth o' lear,
Whilk else had drappit to their children's skair;
For mony a deep, and mony a rare engyne
Ha'e sprung frae Herriot's wark, and sprung frae mine,

HERRIOT.

I find, my friend, that ye but little ken,
There's einow on the earth a set o' men,
Wha, if they get their private pouches lin'd,
Gie na a winnelstrae for a' mankind;
They'll sell their country, flae their conscience bare,
To gar the weigh-bauk turn a single hair.
The government need only bait the line
Wi' the prevailing flee, the gowden coin,
Then our executors, and wise trustees,
Will sell them fishes in forbidden seas,
Upo' their dwining country girn in sport,
Laugh in their sleeve, and get a place at court.

WATSON.

Ere that day come, I'll 'mang our spirits pick
Some ghaist that trokes and conjures wi' Auld Nick,
To gar the wind wi' rougher rumbles blaw,
And weightier thuds than ever mortal saw:
Fire-flaught and hail, wi' tenfald fury's fires,
Shall lay yird-laigh Edina's airy spires:
Tweed shall rin rowtin' down his banks out o'er,
Till Scotland's out o' reach of England's pow'r;
Upo' the briny Borean jaws to float,
And mourn in dowy saughs her dowy lot.

HERRIOT.

Yonder's the tomb of wise Mackenzie[1] fam'd,
Whase laws rebellious bigotry reclaim'd,
Freed the hail land frae covenanting fools,
Wha erst ha'e fash'd us wi' unnumber'd dools;

1 This is another conspicuous mausoleum in Greyfriars churchyard, —the 'burial place' of Sir George Mackenzie of Rosehaugh, the accomplished but unscrupulous Lord Advocate in the persecuting reigns of Charles II. and James II.

Till night we'll tak the swaird aboon our pows,
And than, whan she her ebon chariot rows,
We'll travel to the vaut wi' stealing stap,
And wauk Mackenzie frae his quiet nap;
Tell him our ails, that he, wi' wonted skill,
May fleg the schemers o' the mortmain-bill.

LETTERS.

TO R[OBERT] FERGUSSON.

[These 'Letters,' which have escaped all preceding editors of Fergusson, appeared originally in the 'Perth Magazine of Knowledge and Pleasure' in 1773. The 'Weekly Magazine' of Ruddiman had a wide circulation in Perthshire: but the occasion of the 'Letters' was the appearance in the 'Perth Magazine' of 'The Farmer's Ingle' and others of the poems of Fergusson. 'Andrew Gray' as well as 'Whistleha' are assumed names. It is understood that 'Andrew' was the wise and facetious Dr. Toshack of Perth, with whom, it is still traditionally remembered among the descendants of that witty son of Æsculapius, Fergusson was on terms of intimacy, and on whose death he composed the Epigram given among his English poems, p. 200.]

Deed R., I e'en man dip my pen,
But how to write I dinna ken;
For learning, I got fint a grain,
To tell me how
To write to ony gentleman
Sic like as you.

How blyth am I whan I do see
A piece o' your fine poetrie,
It gars me laugh fou merrilie,
Because there's nane

That gies sic great insight to me,
As your's itlane.

Trouth, Fergusson, I'm verry shier,
(Therefore I think I need na spier)
That ye dwalt anes abien the mier,
For ye do crack
The very sam way we do here
At Amond back.

Ye've English plain enough nae doubt,
And Latin too, but ye do suit
Your lines, to fock that's out about,
'Mang hills and braes:
This is the thing that gars me shout
Sae loud your praise.

Gin ever ye come hereawa'
I hope ye'll be sae gude as ca'
For Andrew Gray, at Whistleha',
The riddle macker.
About a riglength frae Coolsa[1]
Just o'er the water.

We's treat ye, lad, for doing sae weel,
Wi' bannocks o' guid barley meal,
And wi' as mony cabbage kail
As ye can tak:
And twa three chappins o' guid ale,
To gar ye crack.

1 Near Perth. 'Rig-length' literally is 'the length of a ridge,' but the measurement, *to this day*, is arbitrary. It differs considerably, not only in different counties, but in different districts of the same county. and in the same counties at different times. It may in the text be understood as a 'short distance.' I have been unable to localize Coolsa.

Whan this ye see, tak up your pen
And write word back to me again:
And fou you are, mind lat me ken
Without delay;
To hear ye're weel, I'll be right fain:
Your's, ANDREW GRAY.

WHISTLE-HA', *June the* 1*st*, 1773.

TO ANDREW GRAY.

NAE langer byegane, than the streen,
Your couthy letter met my ein:
I lang to wag a cutty speen
On Amond water;
And claw the lips o' truncher tree'n
And tak a clatter.

"Frae Whistleha'" your muse doth cry;
Whare'er ye win I carena bye:
Ye're no the laird o' Whistledry,
As lang's ye can
Wi' routh o' reekin' kail supply
The inward man.

You'll trow me billy, kail's fu' geed
To synd an' peerify the bleid;
'Twill rin like ony scarlet reid,
While patt ye put on
Wi' wethers that round Amond feed,
The primest mutton.

Ane wad maist think ye'd been at Scoon,
Whan kings wure there the Scottish crown;

A soupler or mair fletching loun,
Ne'er hap'd on hurdies,
Whan courtier's tongues war' there in tune
For oily wordies.

Can you nae ither theme divine
To blaw upon, but my engyne?
At Nature keek, she's unco fine
Redd up, and braw:
An can gie scouth to muses nine
At Whistleha'.

Her road awhile is rough an' round,
An' few poetic gowans found;
The stey braes o' the muses ground
We scarce can crawl up;
But on the tap we're light as wind
To scour an' gallop.

Whan first ye sey'd to mak a riddle,
You'd hae an unco fike an' piddle,
An' ablins brak aff i' the middle,
Like Sanny Butler:[1]
'Tis ein sae wi' Apollo's fiddle,
Before we wit lear.

Then flegna at this weary practice,
That's tane to get this wyly nack nice;
The eidant muse begins to crack wise,
An' ne'er cry dule:
It's idle-seat, that banefu' black vice,
That gars her cool.

1 In allusion, it is presumed, to the uncompleted but brilliant poem of 'Hudibras.'

Andrew, at Whistleha', your ein
May lippen for me very sien,
For barley-scones my grinders grien,
They're special eating;
Wi' bizzin cogs that ream abien
Our thrapple weeting.

Till than may you had hale and fier,
That we to Maltman's browst may steer,
And ilka care and ilka fear
To dog-drive ding;
While cheek for chow we laugh and jeer
And crack and sing.

R. Fergusson.

Edinburgh, *June* 23*d*, 1773.

TO R[OBERT] FERGUSSON.

At twall a clock, ae Saturday,
Your letter came to Andrew Gray;
But weel a wat I canna' say
Nor can I tell ye,
How blyth I was a' that hale day,
Tho' you sud fell me.

The riddles they got leave to stand,
To them I wad na pit a hand,
Nor wad I split a single wand,
For twonty pund;
Nor to the cow, worth, make a band,
I was sae fond.

Ye say ye lang to wag a speen,
Wi' Andrew Gray your couthy frien';

Whilk gard me dance upo' the green,
Without a fiddle:
Your canty letter was the tien
That gard me diddle.

But fatfor did ye yon way blaw,
An' me sae fine and souple ca'?
I'm very shier, there's nane ava'
O' yon that's true;
There's nae ane stays i' Whistleha'
Can equal you.

Ye bade me too, at nature keek;
I wonder that ye yon way speak,
Gied fieth it's nae into the breek
O' Andrew Gray:
A fouishenless and silly leek,
Nae worth a strae.

Whan first I sey'd the riddle makin',
The splits they aften took a brakin',
And mony time pat me frae crackin';
Yet soon I grew,
That I, as clever's eel or maukin,
About them flew.

But Nature, lad, is nae for me,
For her my ein right canna' see,
I canna' touch her after thee,
Nor s'all I meddle;
Just jog on at the sauchen tree,
And mak' a riddle.

O' Whistledry I'm nae the laird,
For I o' a' thing am weel saird;

And tho' I say't, the fint a shaird,
A' here awa',
Has ought withint to be compar'd
Wi' Whistleha.

Whan ye come up to Whistleha',
A good fat wather hame I'll ca',
And a' the beastly bleed I'll draw,
'Afore he dee,
And gar Meg mak' him ready a'
For you and me.

Syne to the browster house we'll drive,
And drink till we be like to rive,
An' gin ye like, lad, we s'all strive
Wha's best at singin';
And keep our spirits a' alive
Wi' music ringin'.

O! vow! how happy will we be,
Whan ane anither's face we see,
I'm vera shier that as for me,
I winna ken'
Fat end o' me will imost be,
I'll be sae fain.

ANDREW GRAY.

WHISTLEHA', *Sept. 8th*, 1773.

ON SEEING A BUTTERFLY IN THE STREET.

DAFT gowk, in macaroni dress,
Are ye come here to shew your face,

Bowden wi' pride o' simmer gloss,
To cast a dash at Reikie's cross;
And glowr at mony twa-legg'd creature,
Flees braw by art, tho' worms by nature?
Like country laird in city cleeding,
Ye're come to town to lear' good breeding;
To bring ilk darling toast and fashion,
In vogue amang the flee creation,
That they, like buskit belles and beaus,
May crook their mou' fu' sour at those
Whase weird is still to creep, alas!
Unnotic'd 'mang the humble grass;
While you, wi' wings new buskit trim,
Can far frae yird and reptiles skim;
Newfangle grown wi' new got form,
You soar aboon your mither worm.
Kind Nature lent but for a day
Her wings to make ye sprush and gay;
In her habuliments a while
Ye may your former sel' beguile,
And ding awa' the vexing thought
Of hourly dwining into nought,
By beenging to your foppish brithers,
Black corbies dress'd in peacocks feathers;[1]
Like thee they dander here an' there,
Whan simmer's blinks are warm an' fair,
An' loo to snuff the healthy balm
Whan ev'nin' spreads her wing sae calm;
But whan she girns an' glowrs sae dowr
Frae Borean houff in angry show'r,
Like thee they scoug frae street or field,
An' hap them in a lyther bield;

1 The fable of the 'Crow and the borrowed feathers.

For they war' never made to dree
The adverse gloom o' Fortune's eie,
Nor ever pried life's pining woes,
Nor pu'd the prickles wi' the rose.
Poor butterfly! thy case I mourn,
To green kail-yeard and fruits return:
How cou'd you troke the mavis' note
For "penny pies all-piping hot?"
Can lintie's music be compar'd
Wi' gruntles frae the City-guard?[2]
Or can our flow'rs at ten hours bell
The gowan or the spink excel.
Now shou'd our sclates wi' hailstanes ring,
What cabbage fald wad screen your wing?
Say, fluttering fairy! wer't thy hap
To light beneath braw Nany's cap,
Wad she, proud butterfly of May!
In pity lat you skaithless stay;
The furies glancing frae her ein
Wad rug your wings o' siller sheen,
That, wae for thee! far, far outvy
Her Paris artist's finest dye;
Then a' your bonny spraings wad fall,
An' you a worm be left to crawl.
To sic mishanter rins the laird
Wha quats his ha'-house an' kail-yard,
Grows politician, scours to court,
Whare he's the laughing-stock and sport
Of Ministers, wha jeer an' jibe,
And heeze his hopes wi' thought o' bribe,
Till in the end they flae him bare,
Leave him to poortith, and to care,

1 See p. 6, Note 2.

Their fleetching words o'er late he sees,
He trudges hame, repines and dies.
Sic be their fa' wha dirk thir ben
In blackest business no their ain;
And may they scad their lips fu' leal,
That dip their spoons in ither's kail.

HAME CONTENT.—A SATIRE.

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

Some fock, like bees, fu' glegly rin
To bykes bang'd fu' o' strife and din,
And thieve and huddle crumb by crumb,
Till they have scrapt the dautit plumb,[1]
Then craw fell crously o' their wark,
Tell o'er their turners mark by mark,
Yet darna think to lowse the pose,
To aid their neighbours ails and woes.
Gif gowd can fetter thus the heart,
And gar us act sae base a part,
Shall man, a niggard near-gawn elf!
Rin to the tether's end for pelf;
Learn ilka cunzied scoundrel's trick,
Whan a's done sell his saul to Nick:
I trow they've coft the purchase dear,
That gang sic lengths for warldly gear.
Now whan the Dog-day[2] heats begin
To birsel and to peel the skin,

1 Content! said one, then star'd and bit his thumb,
And leering ask'd if I was worth a plumb?—Ramsay: *Content.*
A Plumb is £100,000.

2 The days in which the dog-star rises and sets with the sun.

May I lie streekit at my ease,
Beneath the caller shady trees,
(Far frae the din o' Borrowstown,)
Whar water plays the haughs bedown,
To jouk the simmer's rigor there,
And breath a while the caller air
'Mang herds an' honest cottar fock,
That till the farm and feed the flock;
Careless o' mair, wha never fash
To lade their kist wi' useless cash,
But thank the gods for what they've sent
O' health enough, and blyth content,
An' pith, that helps them to stravaig
Owr ilka cleugh and ilka craig,
Unkend to a' the weary granes
That aft arise frae gentler banes,
On easy-chair that pamper'd lie,
Wi' banefu' viands gustit high,
And turn and fald their weary clay,
To rax and gaunt the live-lang day.

Ye sages, tell, was man e'er made
To dree this hatefu' sluggard trade?
Steekit frae Nature's beauties a'
That daily on his presence ca';
At hame to girn, and whinge, and pine
For fav'rite dishes, fav'rite wine:
Come then, shake off thir sluggish ties,
An' wi' the bird o' dawning rise;
On ilka bauk the clouds hae spread
Wi' blobs o' dew a pearly bed;
Frae faulds nae mair the owsen rout,
But to the fatt'ning clover lout,
Whare they may feed at heart's content,
Unyokit frae their winter's stent.

Unyoke then, man, an' binna sweer
To ding a hole in ill-haind gear:
O think that eild, wi' wyly fitt,
Is wearing nearer bit by bit;
Gin yence he claws you wi' his paw,
What's siller for? Fiend haet ava,
But gowden playfair, that may please
The second sharger till he dies.

Some daft chiel reads, and taks advice;
The chaise is yokit in a trice;
Awa drives he like huntit de'il,
And scarce tholes time to cool his wheel,
Till he's lord kens how far awa,
At Italy, or Well o' Spa',
Or to Montpelier's safter air;
For far aff fowls hae feathers fair.

There rest him weel; for eith can we
Spare mony glakit gouks like he;
They'll tell whare Tibur's waters rise;
What sea receives the drumly prize,
That never wi' their feet hae mett
The marches o' their ain estate.

The Arno and the Tibur lang
Hae run fell clear in Roman sang;
But, save the reverence of schools!
They're baith but lifeless dowy pools,
Dought they compare wi' bonny Tweed,
As clear as ony lammer-bead?
Or are their shores mair sweet and gay
Than Fortha's haughs or banks o' Tay?[1]
Tho' there the herds can jink the show'rs
'Mang thriving vines an' myrtle bow'rs,

1 It is recorded of the Romans that when the verdant valley of the Tay first burst upon them, from the Hill of Moncrieff, they cried out, "Lo: another Tiber! See a second Martian plain!"

And blaw the reed to kittle strains,
While echo's tongue commends their pains;
Like ours, they canna warm the heart
Wi' simple, saft, bewitching art.
On Leader haughs an' Yarrow braes,
Arcadian herds wad tyne their lays,
To hear the mair melodious sounds
That live on our poetic grounds.

Come, Fancy! come, and let us tread
The simmer's flow'ry velvet bed,
And a' your springs delightfu' lowse
On Tweeda's banks or Cowdenknows,
That, ta'en wi' thy inchanting sang,
Our Scottish lads may round ye thrang,
Sae pleas'd, they'll never fash again
To court you on Italian plain;
Soon will they guess ye only wear
The simple garb o' Nature here;
Mair comely far, an' fair to sight
Whan in her easy cleething dight,
Than in disguise ye was before
On Tibur's, or on Arno's shore.

O Bangour![1] now the hills and dales
Nae mair gi'e back thy tender tales!
The birks on Yarrow now deplore
Thy mournfu' muse has left the shore:
Near what bright burn or chrystal spring
Did you your winsome whistle hing?

1 William Hamilton of Bangour, the author of the very touching ballad of the 'Braes of Yarrow' and various songs and poems distinguished by refined taste and tenderness.—A very beautiful and carefully prepared edition of Hamilton has been recently published by Mr. Thomas G. Stevenson, of Edinburgh. He died at Lyons 1754, but was brought over and interred in Holyrood. He must not be confounded, as has been done by Alexander Campbell and others, with Hamilton of Gilbertfield, a very different and much more vigorous writer. Both of the Hamiltons were the contemporaries and friends of Allan Ramsay.

The muse shall there, wi' wat'ry eie,
Gi'e the dunk swaird a tear for thee;
And Yarrow's genius, dowy dame!
Shall there forget her blude-stain'd stream,
On thy sad grave to seek repose,
Wha mourn'd her fate, condol'd her woes.

LEITH RACES.[1]

In July month, ae bonny morn,[2]
Whan Nature's rokelay green
Was spread o'er ilka rigg o' corn,
To charm our roving een;
Glouring about I saw a quean,
The fairest 'neath the lift;
Her een ware o' the siller sheen,
Her skin like snawy drift,
Sae white that day.

Quod she, "I ferly unco sair,
"That ye sud musand gae,
"Ye wha hae sung o' Hallow-fair,
"Her winter's pranks and play:

1 There is a poem under the same title by George Bruce (Poems and Songs, pp. 105—115. 1 vol. 8vo. 1811), and likewise another by Vedder, in illustration of Geikie's etchings of 'Leith Races,' No. L. He says modestly of Fergusson,

"To eke a verse to thy sweet croon,
Made me lang halt and swither."

But he need not have 'swithered,' for verily if the Doric reed has fallen to the lot of any one, with anything of a Burns' levin-power—without however his pathos and felicity of expression, which are the dower liberally of James Ballantyne—it has assuredly to the right-hearted David Vedder. His 'Leith Races' supplies various scenes omitted by Fergusson, and merits attention, although, as in Major Weir, Westport, there is deficient vigour.

2 See Life prefixed and remarks.

" Whan on Leith-Sands the racers rare,
" Wi' Jocky louns are met,
" Their orrow pennies there to ware,
" And drown themsel's in debt
" Fu' deep that day."

And wha are ye, my winsome dear,
That takes the gate sae early?
Whare do ye win, gin ane may spier,
For I right meikle ferly,
That sic braw buskit laughing lass
Thir bonny blinks shou'd gi'e,
An' loup like Hebe o'er the grass,
As wanton and as free,
Frae dule this day.

" I dwall amang the caller springs
" That weet the Land o' Cakes,
" And aften tune my canty strings
" At bridals and late-wakes:
" They ca' me Mirth; I ne'er was kend
" To grumble or look sour,
" But blyth wad be a lift to lend,
" Gif ye wad sey my pow'r
" An' pith this day."

A bargain be't, and, by my feggs,
Gif ye will be my mate,
Wi' you I'll screw the cheery pegs,
Ye shanna find me blate;
We'll reel an' ramble thro' the sands,
And jeer wi' a' we meet;

Nor hip the daft and gleesome bands
That fill Edina's street
Sae thrang this day.[1]

1 These opening stanzas have been greatly admired: and it is very apparent that Burns took them for his model in the 'Holy Fair.' An imaginary being, whom he names 'Fun,' conducts him, as is well known, to the scene of that extraordinary satire, exactly as Mirth conducts our poet to the 'Races.' For our part, in this instance, we must give the palm to the elder bard, who, we think, except perhaps in the initial stanza of the 'Holy Fair,' is not at all 'far distanced' in the poetical painting, as has been affirmed. The Rev. James Nicol of Traquair, in his poem of the 'Kern-Supper,' has likewise taken Fergusson for his model. As he is less known, the opening stanzas may not be unacceptable:—

* * Forth I wauk'd, an' pensive, eyed
A' nature dull an' dwinin';
'Till skelpin owre the brae I spied
A Quean wi' glorie shinin';
Her face shaw'd beautie's brightest pride,
Averse to sad repinin';
Her wavin' ringlets strave to hide
Twa dimplin cheeks, inclinin
To fun that day!

As forat cam' the bloomin maid,
Nor stern, nor yet affrighten'd;
Before her care and sorrow fled,
Her smiles the passions brighten'd;
Round her the Loves an' Graces play'd,
An' a' her beauties highten'd;
Her looks a keen, firm soul display'd;
Her sparklin een enlighten'd
The scene that day!

A flowrie chaplet bound her head,
Fresh frae the hand o' nature,
Whase glowin' colours, white an' red,
Set aff ilk lovelie feature;
Around her flow'd a tartan plaid,
The rainbow's dyes nae better;
Grace was in ilka step she made,
Proportion in her stature
An' shape that day!

Sae, in mild, simple beautie drest,
I've seen my Nancy comin'
To make the hour completelie blest,
Wi' pleasure past a' summin'.—
Wi' smilin' face I forat prest,
Her breath the air perfumin',

Ere servant maids had wont to rise
To seeth the breakfast kettle,
Ilk dame her brawest ribbons tries,
To put her on her mettle,
Wi' wiles some silly chiel to trap,
(And troth he's fain to get her,)
But she'll craw kniefly in his crap,
Whan, wow! he canna flit her
Frae hame that day.

Now, mony a scaw'd and bare-ars'd lown
Rise early to their wark,
Enough to fley a muckle town,
Wi' dinsome squeel and bark.
"Here is the true an' faithfu' list
"O' Noblemen and Horses;
"Their eild, their weight, their height, their grist,
"That rin for Plates or Purses
Fu' fleet this day."

An' catch'd her in my arms, an' kiss'd
Her lips, like roses bloomin'
An' sweet that day!

Howt! let a be! she smilin' says;
Tak' me for an adviser;
Ye've aft been warn'd against sic ways,
But never hae grown wiser.
Whan passion a' her charms displays,
Learn bravelie to despise her.—
Now the Kern-Supper claims your lays,
Where monie funnie ploys were
Beath night an' day!

Beauty, quo I, need never fear
That I her suit refuse.—
But what's your name? I fain would spier.—
Quo she, your youthfu' Muse:
I'm come your pensive wauks to cheer,
Gif ye'll my service use.—
'Tis doon, quo I, my bonnie dear!
I'm yours—gif you'll excuse
My fauts this day!

Poems, Vol. I., pp. 138—141.

To whisky plooks that brunt for wooks
On town-guard soldiers' faces,
Their barber bauld his whittle crooks,
An' scrapes them for the races:
Their stumps erst us'd to filipegs,
Are dight in spaterdashes
Whase barkent hides scarce fend their legs
Frae weet and weary plashes
O' dirt that day.

"Come, hafe a care (the captain cries),
"On guns your bagnets thraw;
"Now mind your manual exercise,
"An' marsh down raw by raw."
And as they march he'll glowr about,
Tent a' their cuts and scars:
'Mang them fell mony a gausy snout
Has gusht in birth-day wars,
Wi' blude that day.

Her nanesel maun be carefu' now,
Nor maun she pe misleard,
Sin baxter lads hae seal'd a vow
To skelp and clout the guard;[1]
I'm sure Auld Reikie kens o' nane
That wou'd be sorry at it,
Tho' they should dearly pay the kane,
An' get their tails weel sautit
And sair thir days.

The tinkler billies i' the Bow[2]
Are now less eidant clinking,

1 Note 2, p. 6. "A skirmish," says Scott, "with these veterans was a favourite recreation with the rabble of Edinburgh."

2 The Westbow street, then occupied principally by tinsmiths or 'tink-

As lang's their pith or siller dow,
They're daffin', and they're drinking.
Bedown Leith Walk what burrochs reel
Of ilka trade and station,
That gar their wives an' childer feel
Toom weyms for their libation
O' drink thir days.

The browster wives thegither harl
A' trash that they can fa' on;
They rake the grounds o' ilka barrel,
To profit by the lawen:
For weel wat they a skin leal het
For drinking needs nae hire;
At drumbly gear they take nae pet;
Foul water slockens fire
And drouth thir days.

They say, ill ale has been the deid
O' mony a beirdly lown;
Then dinna gape like gleds wi' greed
To sweel hail bickers down:
Gin Lord send mony ane the morn,
They'll ban fu' sair the time
That e'er they toutit aff the horn
Which wambles thro' their weym
Wi' pain that day.

The Buchan bodies thro' the beech
Their bunch of Findrums cry,
An' skirl out baul', in Norland speech,
"Gueed speldings, fa will buy."

lers,' concerning whom let me ask all readers to consult that mine of curious Scotic memorials, Mr. Daniel Wilson's 'Edinburgh in the Olden Time.' 2 vols. 4to.

An', by my saul, they're nae wrang gear
To gust a stirrah's mow;
Weel staw'd wi' them, he'll never spear
The price of being fu'
Wi' drink that day.

Now wyly wights at rowly powl,[1]
An' flingin' o' the dice,
Here brake the banes o' mony a soul,
Wi' fa's upo' the ice:
At first the gate seems fair an' straught,
So they had fairly till her;
But wow! in spite o' a' their maught,
They're rookit o' their siller
An' goud that day.

Around whare'er ye fling your een,
The haiks like wind are scourin';
Some chaises honest folk contain,
An' some hae mony a whore in;
Wi' rose and lily, red and white,
They gie themselves sic fit airs,
Like Dian, they will seem perfite;
But its nae goud that glitters
Wi' them thir days.

1 The game otherwise called 'Ninepins,' which forms the subject of one of Geikie's admirable etchings, No. 58, and which, along with Nos. 62 and 63, 'Leith Races,' well illustrates the present poem. Vedder graphically describes a hero engaged in the game:

A burly loon, wi' sweeping straikes,
Is thrang at rowly powly,
Clearing a buird o' gingbread cakes
Frae a wee dindy cowly.
He rattles till the grund a' shakes,
(He's seen by his sweet Molly:)
What tho' his pouch be cleared o' maiks,
Fools maun pay for their folly
On sic a day.

LEITH RACES. *Geikie*, p. 42.

The lyon here, wi' open paw,
May cleek in mony hunder,
Wha geck at Scotland and her law,
His wyly talons under;
For ken, tho' Jamie's laws are auld,
(Thanks to the wise recorder),
His lyon yet roars loud and bauld,
To had the Whigs in order
Sae prime this day.

To town-guard drum of clangor clear,
Baith men and steeds are raingit;
Some liveries red or yellow wear,
And some are tartan spraingit:
And now the red, the blue e'en-now
Bids fairest for the market;
But, 'ere the sport be done, I trow
Their skins are gayly yarkit
And peel'd thir days.

Siclike in Robinhood[1] debates,
Whan twa chiels hae a pingle;
E'en-now some couli[2] gets his aits,
An' dirt wi' words they mingle,
Till up loups he, wi' diction fu',
There's lang and dreech contesting;
For now they're near the point in view;
Now ten miles frae the question
In hand that night.

The races o'er, they hale the dools,
Wi' drink o' a' kin-kind;

1 See note 3, p. 49.

2 A collegian [student], a member of the University.—*Communicated by Mr. Robert Burns, Secundus.* Spoken usually of any one in contempt.

Great feck gae hirpling hame like fools,
The cripple lead the blind.
May ne'er the canker o' the drink
E'er make our spirits thrawart,
'Case we git wharewitha' to wink
Wi' een as blue's a blawart
Wi' straiks thir days!

HALLOWFAIR.

TUNE—"*Fy let us a' to the Bridal.*"

[This humorous ballad-song, like the 'Lea-rig,' had long been fugitively ascribed to Fergusson, when Mr. Stenhouse, in his Notes to Johnson's Scots Musical Museum, 451, p. 472 sq. Note, p. 399 sq. Vol. V., assigned it *positively* to him, on the authority (it is understood) of Mr. David Herd, who only died in 1810. It was originally written for Mr. Herd, and was published posthumously in the well-known Collection of 'Ancient and *Modern* Scottish Songs, Heroic Ballads, etc.' 2 Vols. 12mo, 1776. Vol. II. p. 169—171.

Hallowfair is adapted in the Museum to an old tune called 'Wally Honey,' taken from Oswald's Caledonian Pocket Companion. Book VII. p. 6. The reader may compare the 'Song' with the 'Poem' of Hallowfair (ante, p. 33 sq.)]

THERE'S fouth of braw Jockies and Jennies
Comes weel-busked into the fair,
With ribbons on their cockernonies,
And fouth o' fine flour on their hair.[1]
Maggie she was sae well busked,
That Willie was ty'd to his bride;
The pounie was ne'er better whisked
Wi' cudgel that hang frae his side.
Sing farrel, &c.

1 Which was then in fashion.

But Maggie was wondrous jealous
To see Willie busked sae braw;
And Sawney he sat in the alehouse,
And hard at the liquor did caw.
There was Geordy that well loo'd his lassie,
He touk the pint-stoup in his arms,
And hugg'd it, and said, trouth they're saucy
That loos nae a good father's bairn.
Sing farrel, &c.

There was Wattie the muirland laddie,
That rides on the bonny grey cout,
With sword by his side like a cadie,[1]
To drive in the sheep and the knout.
His doublet sae weel it did fit him,
It scarcely came down to mid thigh,
With hair pouther'd, hatt, and a feather,
And housing at courpon and tee.[2]
Sing farrel, &c.

But bruckie play'd boo to bausie,[3]
And aff scour'd the cout like the win:
Poor Wattie he fell in the causie,
And birs'd a' the bains in his skin.
His pistols fell out of the houlsters,
And were a' bedaubed with dirt;
The folks they came round him in clusters,
Some leugh, and cry'd, Lad was you hurt?
Sing farrel, &c.

1 One who gains a livelihood by running errands.—*See Jamieson in loc.*
2 The horse-furniture at the crupper and the nose and head.
3 *Id est*—The brucket or cow with brown spots bellowed to bausie, which is applied to a fat sleek animal—the noise they made, frightened the cout or horse.

But cout wad let nae body steer him,
He was ay sae wanton and skeegh;
The packman's stands he o'erturn'd them,
And gar'd a' the Jocks stand a-beech;
Wi' sniring behind and before him,
For sic is the metal of brutes:
Poor Wattie, and wae's me for him,
Was fain to gang hame in his boots.
Sing farrel, &c.

Now it was late in the ev'ning,
And boughting-time was drawing near;
The lasses had stench'd their greening
With fouth of braw apples and beer.
There was Lillie, and Tibbie, and Sibbie,
And Ceicy on the spinnell could spin,
Stood glowring at signs and glass winnocks,
But deil a ane bade them come in.
Sing farrel, &c.

God guide's! saw you ever the like o' it?
See yonder's a bonny black swan;
It glowrs as't wad fain be at us;
What's yon that it hads in its hands?
Awa', daft gouk, cries Wattie,
They're a' but a rickle of sticks;
See there is Bill, Jock, and auld Hackie,
And yonder's Mess John and auld Nick.
Sing farrel, &c.

Quoth Maggie, come buy us our fairing;
And Wattie right sleely cou'd tell,
I think thou're the flower of the claughing
In trouth now I'se gie you my sell.

But wha wau'd e'er thought it o' him,
That e'er he had rippled the lint?
Sae proud was he o' his Maggie,
Tho' she did baith scalie and squint.[1]
Sing farrel, &c.

ODE TO THE GOWDSPINK.[2]

Frae fields whare Spring her sweets has blawn
Wi' caller verdure o'er the lawn,
The gowdspink comes in new attire,
The brawest 'mang the whistling choir,
That, ere the sun can clear his ein,
Wi' glib notes sane the simmer's green.
Sure Nature herried mony a tree,
For spraings and bonny spats to thee;
Nae mair the rainbow can impart
Sic glowing ferlies o' her art,
Whase pencil wrought its freaks at will
On thee the sey-piece o' her skill.
Nae mair through straths in simmer dight
We seek the rose to bless our sight;
Or bid the bonny wa'-flowers blaw[3]
Whare yonder Ruin's crumblin' fa':[4]
Thy shining garments far outstrip
The cherries upo' Hebe's lip,
And fool the tints that Nature chose
To busk and paint the crimson rose.

1 The same—the one used in Scotland, the other in England: but it appears that Fergusson applies 'scalie' to the person, as ill-formed, and 'squint' to the eyes.

2 The Goldfinch, the most beautiful in its plumage of all Scottish songsters. It is variously known by the name goldie, goudie, goudspink, gowdspink.

3 *Var.* sprout. 4 *Var.* on yonder lofty snout.

'Mang men, wae's-heart! we aften find
The brawest drest want peace of mind,
While he that gangs wi' ragged coat
Is weil contentit wi' his lot.
Whan wand wi' glewy birdlime's set,
To steal far aff your dautit mate,
Blyth wad ye change your cleething gay
In lieu of lav'rock's sober grey.
In vain thro' woods you sair may ban
Th' envious treachery of man,
That, wi' your gowden glister ta'en,
Still haunts you on the simmer's plain,
And traps you 'mang the sudden fa's
O' winter's dreary dreepin' snaws.
Now steekit frae the gowany field,
Frae ilka fav'rite houff and bield,
But mergh, alas! to disengage
Your bonny bouck frae fettering cage,
Your free-born bosom beats in vain
For darling liberty again.
In window hung, how aft we see
Thee keek around at warblers free.
That carrol saft, and sweetly sing
Wi' a' the blythness of the spring?
Like Tantalus[1] they hing you here
To spy the glories o' the year;
And tho' you're at the burnie's brink,
They douna suffer you to drink.
Ah, Liberty! thou bonny dame,
How wildly wanton is thy stream,
Round whilk the birdies a' rejoice,
An' hail you wi' a gratefu' voice.

1 Homer: Ody. xi. 582.

The gowdspink chatters joyous here,
And courts wi' gleesome sangs his peer:
The mavis frae the new-bloom'd thorn
Begins his lauds at earest morn;
And herd lowns louping o'er the grass,
Need far less fleetching till their lass,
Than paughty damsels bred at courts,
Wha thraw their mou's and take the dorts:
But, reft of thee, fient flee we care
For a' that life ahint can spare.
The gowdspink, that sae lang has kend
Thy happy sweets (his wonted friend),
Her sad confinement ill can brook
In some dark chamber's dowy nook;
Tho' Mary's hand his nebb supplies,
Unkend to hunger's painfu' cries,
Ev'n beauty canna chear the heart
Frae life, frae liberty apart;
For now we tyne its wonted lay,
Sae lightsome sweet, sae blythely gay. [1]
Thus Fortune aft a curse can gie,
To wyle us far frae liberty:
Then tent her syren smiles wha list,
I'll ne'er envy your girnal's grist;
For whan fair freedom smiles nae mair,
Care I for life? Shame fa' the hair:
A field o'ergrown wi' rankest stubble,
The essence of a paltry bubble. [2]

1 The goldfinch hops from spray to spray,
At large he flies o'er hill, and dale, and down:
Is not each bush—each spreading tree his own?
What then are honours, pomp and gold?
Are these a price to purchase Liberty?—GAY.

2 Life without her's full of trouble,
Nothing but a silly bubble.

ALEX. PENNICUIK. *Song to the tune of Morning o' Geberland.* See Note 2, p. 23.

THE ELECTION.

Nunc est bibendum, et bendere Bickerum magnum;
Cavete Town-guardum, Dougal Geddum atque Campbellum. 1

Rejoice, ye Burghers, ane an' a',
Lang look't for's come at last;
Sair war your backs held to the wa'
Wi' poortith an' wi' fast:
Now ye may clap your wings an' craw,
And gayly busk ilk' feather,
For Deacon Cocks hae pass'd a law
To rax an' weet your leather
Wi' drink thir days.

Haste, Epps, quo' John, an' bring my gezz!
Tak tent ye dinna't spulzie;
Last night the barber ga't a friz,
An' straikit it wi' ulzie.

1 Ged and Campbell were officers in the town-guard. Kay has preserved the queer physiognomy of the former, of whom many anecdotes still circulate. The Dougal Ged of this macaronic distich appears from Mr. Chambers's 'Traditions of Edinburgh,' p. 222. Ed: 1847, to have been remarkable, *at least*, for his family connexions.

It was a brother [?] who, under the name of Don Patricio Ged, rendered such kindly and effective service to Commodore Byron, as gratefully recorded in the well-known 'Narrative;' and gracefully touched on by Campbell in the 'Pleasures of Hope'—

> 'He found a warmer world, a milder clime,
> A home to rest, a shelter to defend,
> Peace and repose, *a Briton and a friend.*'

Another member of the family, William Ged, originally a goldsmith in Edinburgh, was the inventor of stereotype printing.

'Dougal' himself had been a silversmith, but in his own conceit, his red coat as a Town-Guard officer made him completely military. Seeing a lady without a beau at the door of the Assembly Room, he offered his services, 'if the arm of an old soldier could be of any use.' 'Hoot awa Dougal,' said the lady, accepting, however, his assistance; 'an auld tinkler you mean.'

Hae done your paritch lassie Liz,
Gi'e me my sark and gravat;
I'se be as braw's the Deacon is
Whan he taks affidavit
O' faith the day.

Whar's Johnny gaun, cries neebor Bess,
That he's sae gayly bodin
Wi' new kam'd wig, weel syndet face,
Silk hose, for hamely hodin?
"Our Johnny's nae sma' drink you'll guess,
"He's trig as ony muir-cock,
"An' forth to mak a Deacon, lass;
"He downa speak to poor fock
Like us the day."

The coat ben-by i' the kist-nook,
That's been this towmonth swarmin,
Is brought yence mair thereout to look,
To fleg awa the vermin:
Menzies o' moths an' flaes are shook,
An' i' the floor they howder,
Till in a birn beneath the croock
They're singit wi a scowder
To death that day.

The canty cobler quats his sta',
His rozet an' his lingans;
His buik has dree'd a sair, sair fa'
Frae meals o' bread an' ingans:
Now he's a pow o' wit and law,
An' taunts at soals an' heels;
To Walker's[1] he can rin awa,

1 The hotel which was in Prince's Street where the dinner took place after the election of the magistrates, which took place at Michaelmas

There whang his creams an' jeels
Wi' life that day.

The lads in order tak their seat,
(The de'il may claw the clungest)
They stegh an' connach sae the meat,
Their teeth mak mair than tongue haste:
Their claes sae cleanly dight an' feat,
An' eke their craw-black beavers,
Like masters mows hae found the gate
To tassels teugh wi' slavers
Fu' lang that day.

The dinner done, for brandy strang
They cry, to weet their thrapple,
To gar the stamack bide the bang,
Nor wi' its laden grapple..
The grace is said—its nae o'er lang;
The claret reams in bells;
Quod Deacon let the toast round gang,
"Come, here's our noble sel's
Weel met the day."

Weels me o' drink, quo' cooper Will,
My barrel has been geyz'd ay,
An' has na gotten sic a fill
Sin fu' on handsel Teysday:
But makes-na, now its got a sweel,
Ae gird I shanna cast lad,
Or else I wish the horned de'il
May Will wi' kittle cast dad
To hell the day!

It was in this hotel that the famous aeronaut Lunardi resided while in Edinburgh.

The Magistrates fu' wyly are,
Their lamps are gayly blinking,
But they might as leive burn elsewhere,
When fock's blind fu' wi' drinking.
Our Deacon wadna ca' a chair,
The foul ane durst him na-say;
He took shanks-naig, but fient may care,
He arslins kiss'd the cawsey
Wi' bir that night.

Weel loes me o' you, souter Jock,
For tricks ye buit be trying,
Whan greapin for his ain bed-stock,
He fa's whare Will's wife's lying.
Will coming hame wi' ither fock,
He saw Jock there before him;
Wi' master laiglen, like a brock
He did wi' stink maist smore him
Fu' strang that night.

Then wi' a souple leathern whang
He gart them fidge an' girn ay,
"Faith, chiel, ye's no for naething gang
"Gin ye man reel my pirny."
Syne wi' a muckle alshin lang
He brodit Maggie's hurdies;
An' 'cause he thought her i' the wrang,
There pass'd nae bonny wordies
'Mang them that night.

Now, had some laird his lady fand,
In sic unseemly courses,
It might hae loos'd the haly band,
Wi' law-suits an' divorces:

But the niest day they a' shook hands,
And ilka crack did sowder,
While Megg for drink her apron pawns,
For a' the gude-man cow'd her
Whan fu' last night.

Glowr round the cawsey, up an' down,
What mobbing and what plotting!
Here politicians bribe a loun
Against his saul for voting.
The gowd that inlakes half a crown
Thir blades lug out to try them,
They pouch the gowd, nor fash the town
For weights an' scales to weigh them
Exact that day.

Then Deacons at the counsel stent
To get themsel's presentit:
For towmonths twa their saul is lent,
For the town's gude indentit:
Lang's their debating thereanent;
About protests they're bauthrin,
While Sandy Fife,[1] to mak content,
On bells plays Clout the caudron
To them that day.

Ye lowns that troke in doctor's stuff,
You'll now hae unco slaisters;
Whan windy blaws their stamacks puff,
They'll need baith pills an' plaisters;
For tho' ev'now they look right bluff,
Sic drinks, 'ere hillocks meet,

1 The bellman of St. Giles, in the steeple of which there was then, and still is, a set of music bells.

Will hap some deacons in a truff,
Inrow'd in the lang leet[1]
O' death yon night.

TO

THE PRINCIPAL AND PROFESSORS

OF

THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS,

ON THEIR SUPERB TREAT TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON.

[Boswell, in his 'Tour to the Hebrides,' records this 'superb treat,' so genially 'flyted' about by Fergusson.

"The Professors entertained us with a very good dinner. Present: Murison, Shaw, Cook, Hill, Haddo, Watson, Flint, Brown.—*Sub Thursday*, 19*th August* [1773]."]

St. Andrews town may look right gawsy,
Nae grass will grow upo' her cawsey,
Nor wa'-flowers of a yellow dye,
Glour dowy o'er her ruins high,
Sin Samy's head weel pang'd wi' lear,
Has seen the Alma mater there:
Regents, my winsome billy boys!
'Bout him you've made an unco noise;
Nae doubt for him your bells wad clink
To find him upon Eden's brink,[2]
An' a' things nicely set in order,
Wad kep him on the Fifan border;

1 In the business, says Robert Chambers, of an Edinburgh municipal election, according to the old mode, a large list of eligible persons first presented by the trades, that the magistrates might shorten it, was called the lang leet. When abridged, it was called the short leet. The word is from the French élite, choice persons. Death's endless list is here, with happy humour, called his lang leet.

2 A well-known river near St. Andrews.

I'se warrant now frae France an' Spain,
Baith cooks and scullions mony ane
Wad gar the pats an' kettles tingle
Around the college kitchen ingle,
To fleg frae a' your craigs the roup,
Wi' reeking het and crieshy soup;
And snails and puddocks mony hunder
Wad beeking lie the hearth-stane under,
Wi' roast and boil'd, an' a' kin kind,
To heat the body, cool the mind.
But hear me lads! gin I'd been there,
How I wad trimm'd the bill o' fare!
For ne'er sic surly wight as he
Had met wi' sic respect frae me.
Mind ye what Sam,[1] the lying loun!
Has in his Dictionar laid down?
That aits in England are a feast
To cow an' horse, an' sican beast,
While in Scots ground this growth was common
To gust the gab o' man and woman.
Tak tent, ye Regents! then, an' hear
My list o' gudely hameil gear,
Sic as ha'e often rax'd the wyme
O' blyther fallows mony time:
Mair hardy, souple, steive an' swank,
Than ever stood on Samy's shank.

1 This is literally surly 'Sam's' definition: but it was literally the common opinion of our fatherland. Scotland owes much to Burns and Scott for disabusing the English mind of its errant notions concerning us: yet still it is astonishing the ignorance that prevails. In all Scottish views—town or landscape—the 'kilt' figures, and we have seen a picture of Burns and his Highland Mary, in which the immortal ploughman is 'full displayed' in a gorgeous Royal Stuart tartan, and Mary, of course, with an ample, dazzling-coloured plaid. The opprobrious definition was silently suppressed. It was retained, however, in the folios of Fergusson's time. Fourth edition, 1773.

Imprimis, then, a haggis fat,
Weel tottled in a seything pat,
Wi' spice and ingans weel ca'd thro'
Had help'd to gust the stirrah's mow,
And plac'd itsel in truncher clean
Before the gilpy's glowrin een.
Secundo, then a gude sheep's head
Whase hide was singit, never flead,
And four black trotters cled wi' girsle,
Bedown his throat had learn'd to hirsle.
What think ye neist, o' gude fat brose
To clag his ribs? a dainty dose!
And white and bloody puddins routh,
To gar the Doctor skirl, O drouth!
Whan he cou'd never houp to merit
A cordial glass o' reaming claret,
But thraw his nose, and brize and pegh
O'er the contents o' sma' ale quegh:
Then let his wisdom girn and snarl
O'er a weel-tostit girdle farl,
An' learn, that maugre o' his wame,
Ill bairns are ay best heard at hame.
Drummond,[1] lang syne, o' Hawthornden,
The wyliest an' best o' men,
Has gi'en you dishes ane or mae,
That wad ha' gard his grinders play,
Not to Roast Beef,[2] old England's life,
But to the auld East Nook of Fife,[2]
Whare Creilian crafts cou'd weel ha'e gi'en
Scate-rumples to ha'e clear'd his een;

1 See 'Polemo Middinia' in the original, or in the recent effective and broadly humorous rendering of it by the late lamented Professor Tennant of St. Andrews.
2 Alluding to two tunes under these titles.—*F.*

Than neist whan Samy's heart was faintin,
He'd lang'd for scate to make him wanton.
Ah! willawins, for Scotland now,
Whan she maun stap ilk birky's mow
Wi' eistacks, grown as 'tware in pet
In foreign land, or green-house het,
When cog o' brose an' cutty spoon
Is a' our cottar childer's boon,
Wha thro' the week, till Sunday's speal,
Toil for pease-cods an' gude lang kail.
Devall then, Sirs, and never send
For daintiths to regale a friend,
Or, like a torch at baith ends burning,
Your house 'll soon grow mirk and mourning.
What's this I hear some cynic say?[1]
Robin, ye loun! its nae fair play;
Is there nae ither subject rife
To clap your thumb upon but Fife?
Gi'e o'er, young man, you'll meet your corning,
Than caption war, or charge of horning;
Some canker'd surly sour-mow'd carline
Bred near the abbey o' Dumfarline,
Your shoulders yet may gi'e a lounder,
An' be of verse the mal-confounder.
Come on, ye blades! but ere ye tulzie,
Or hack our flesh wi' sword or gulzie,

1 The poet refers to a 'duel-challenge,' which was addressed to him by a chivalric gentleman in Dunfermline, who was highly offended with the closing reflections in the 'Expedition to Fife,' which see. Fergusson, however, had admirers in Fife, for in a copy of verses which were sent to the publisher of the 'Weekly Magazine' from Fife, it is said,

"In Fife, troth, ilka body's keen
To see his verse:
Faith you may greet wi' baith your e'en
When Rob grows hearse."

Vol. L. p. 16.

Ne'er shaw your teeth, nor look like stink,
Nor o'er an empty bicker blink:
What weets the wizen an' the wyme,
Will mend your prose and heal my rhyme.

ELEGY ON JOHN HOGG,

LATE PORTER TO THE UNIVERSITY OF ST. ANDREWS.

[John was a great favourite with the students. He was what is generally signified in Scotland by a "bien body," being proprietor of a park of land lying on the south-west of St. Andrews, betwixt the Mill Lead and Nether Burn, which now belongs to Mr. David Anderson, Farmer. It is a pretty little spot. He had likewise an acre of land on the other side of the 'Burn:' and some house property in North Street, St. Andrews. John must have been somewhat parsimonious in his way, for it is told of him 'among the old people in St. Andrews still,' that his wife, "his winsome Kate," was anxious on a time to get a 'black silk cap' [bonnet], but John said, "Na, what mair would the regents' wives hae?" meaning the Professors, who were then called regents. Mrs. Hogg, it would appear, was rather inclined "to be the ledy," and often urged John to allow her tea, which was not every one's beverage then, but John indulged her seldom, and when that outlay was made, he pinched her in the article of white bread, keeping her strictly to the bannocks or oat cakes. John [alas!] has no head-stone. His "dowy widow," whose name was Catharine Gourlay, was married again to Dean of Guild Landale, a respectable man, a dyer in St. Andrews, whose 'silver ball' hangs first on the Silver Club of the ancient Golf Club Society there, at this day. 'Winsome Kate' survived Mr. Landale also: and I find that she kept a sewing school after his death.—*Communicated in substance by John Buddo, Esq., Writer, St. Andrews.*]

Death, what's ado? the de'il be licket,
Or wi' your stang ye ne'er had pricket,

Or our auld Alma Mater tricket
O' poor John Hogg,
And trail'd him ben thro' your mirk wicket
As dead's a log.

Now ilka glaikit scholar loun
May dander wae wi' duddy gown;
Kate Kennedy[1] to dowy crune
May mourn and clink,
And steeples o' Saint Andrew's town
To yird may sink.

Sin' Pauly Tam,[2] wi' canker'd snout,
First held the students in about
To wear their claes as black as soot,
They ne'er had reason,
Till death John's haffit ga'e a clout
Sae out o' season.

When regents met at common schools,
He taught auld Tam to hale the dules,
And eidant to row right the bowls
Like ony emmack;
He kept us a' within the rules
Strict academic.

Heh! wha will tell the students now,
To meet the Pauly cheek for chow,
Whan he, like frightsome wirrikow,
Had wont to rail,

1 A bell in the College steeple.—*F.* It is still in the steeple of St. Leonard's College: and is still known by the name of Catharine Kennedy, daughter of the Bishop, from whom it was a gift. It is the reverse of the 'wanworthy, crazy, dinsone thing,' of the Tron Kirk.

2 A name given by the students, some time ago, to one of the members of the university.—*F.*

And set our stamacks in a low,
Or we turn'd tail.

Ah, Johnny! aften did I grumble
Frae cozy bed fu' ear' to tumble;
Whan art and part I'd been in some ill,
Troth I was sweer,
His words they brodit like a wumill
Frae ear to ear.

Whan I had been fu' laith to rise,
John than begude to moralize:
" The tither nap, the sluggard cries,
" And turns him round;
" Sae spake auld Solomon the wise
" Divine profound!"

Nae dominie, or wise mess John,
Was better lear'd in Solomon;
He cited proverbs one by one
Ilk vice to tame;
He gar'd ilk sinner sigh an' groan,
And fear hell's flame.

" I hae nae meikle skill, quo' he,
" In what you ca' philosophy;
" It tells that baith the earth and sea
" Rin round about;
" Either the Bible tells a lie,
Or you're a' out.

" Its i' the psalms o' David writ,
" That this wide warld ne'er shou'd flit,
" But on the waters coshly sit
Fu' steeve and lasting;

"An' was na he a head o' wit
"At sic contesting!"

On einings cauld wi' glee we'd trudge
To heat our shins in Johnny's lodge;
The de'il ane thought his bum to budge
Wi' siller on us:
To claw het pints we'd never grudge
O' *molationis.*

Say ye, red gowns! that aften here
Hae toasted bakes to Kattie's beer,
Gin e'er thir days hae had their peer,
Sae blyth, sae daft;
You'll ne'er again in life's career
Sit ha'f sae saft.

Wi' haffit locks sae smooth and sleek,
John look'd like ony antient Greek;
He was a Naz'rene a' the week,
And doughtna tell out
A bawbee Scots to straik his cheek
Till Sunday fell out.

For John ay lo'ed to turn the pence,
Thought poortith was a great offence:[1]

1 In a very humorous letter to Andrew Gray from 'Philo-Crambo,' in reply to his second epistle to Fergusson, this and the succeeding stanza are very happily introduced. Fergusson had taken no notice of Andrew Gray's second epistle, and therefore in duty bound Philo-Crambo did so for him. He says—

* * * * * I maun answer thine
Because that Robin
Nae leisure has to write a line,
For thrang wi' jobbin.

For he's (the truth to you I'll own)
Sae warldly an' sae greedy grown,

"What recks tho' ye ken mood and tense?
"A hungry wyme
"For gowd wad wi' them baith dispense
"At ony time.

"Ye ken what ails maun ay befal
"The chiel that will be prodigal;
"When wasted to the very spaul
"He turns his tusk,
"For want o' comfort to his saul
"O hungry husk!

Ye royit lowns! just do as he'd do;
For mony braw green shaw and meadow
He's left to cheer his dowy widow,
His winsome Kate,
That to him prov'd a canny she-dow,
Baith ear' and late.

There's ne'er a scribe in a' our town
That is mair keen
O' cash, than this young thrifty loun
Our couthy frien'.

He owns, he "loves to turn the pence,"
Says—"Poortith is a great offence:
"What recks tho' ye ken mood and tense?
"A hungry wyme
"For gowd wad wi' them baith dispense
At ony time.

"Ye ken what ails maun ay befal
"The chiel that will be prodigal;
"When wasted to the very spaul
"He turns his tusk,
"For want o' comfort to his saul
"O hungry husk!"

Perth Magazine, Vol. vi. pp. 51, 52: October 8th, 1773.

A DRINK ECLOGUE.

LANDLADY, BRANDY AND WHISKY.

On auld worm-eaten skelf, in cellar dunk,
Whare hearty benders syn'd their drouthy trunk,
Twa chappin bottles, pang'd wi' liquor fu',
Brandy the tane, the tither Whisky blue,
Grew canker'd; for the twa ware het within,
An' het-skin'd fock to flyting soon begin;
The Frenchman fizz'd, and first wad foot the field,
While paughty Scotsman scorn'd to beenge or yield.

BRANDY.

Black be your fa! ye cottar loun mislear'd,
Blawn by the porters, chairman, city-guard; [1]
Ha'e ye nae breeding, that you cock [2] your nose
Anent my sweetly gusted cordial dose.
I've been near pauky courts, and aften there
Ha'e ca'd hystericks frae the dowy fair;
And courtiers aft gaed greening for my smack,
To gar them bauldly glour, and gashly crack.
The priest, to bang mishaunters black, and cares,
Has sought me in his closet for his prayers.
What tig then takes the fates, that they can thole,
Thrawart to fix me in this weary hole,
Sair fash'd wi' din, wi' darkness, and wi' stinks,
Whare cheery day-light thro' the mirk ne'er blinks.

WHISKY.

But ye maun be content, and mauna rue,
Tho' erst ye've bizz'd in bonny madam's mou';

1 See p. 6, Note 2. 2 *Var.* shaw.

Wi' thoughts like thae your heart may sairly dunt;
The warld's now chang'd, it's no like use and wont;
For here, wae's me! there's nouther lord nor laird
Come to get heartscad frae their stamack skair'd:
Nae mair your courtier louns will shaw their face,
For they glowr eiry at a friend's disgrace:
But heeze your heart up—Whan at court you hear
The patriot's thrapple wat wi' reaming beer;
Whan chairman, weary wi' his daily gain,
Can syn his whistle wi' the clear champaign;
Be hopefu', for the time will soon row round,
Whan you'll nae langer dwall beneath the ground.

BRANDY.

Wanwordy gowk! did I sae aften shine
Wi' gowden glister thro' the chrystal fine,
To thole your taunts, that seenil hae been seen
Awa frae luggie, quegh, or truncher treein;
Gif honour wad but lat, a challenge shou'd
Twin ye o' Highland tongue and Highland blude;
Wi' cairds like thee I scorn to file my thumb,
For gentle spirits gentle breeding doom.

WHISKY.

Truly I think it right you get your alms,
Your high heart humbled amang common drams;
Braw days for you, whan fools newfangle fain,
Like ither countries better than their ain,
For there ye never saw sic chancy days,
Sic balls, assemblies, operas, or plays:
Hame-o'er langsyne you ha'e been blyth to pack
Your a' upon a sarkless soldier's back;
For you thir lads, as weel-lear'd trav'lers tell,
Hae sell'd their sarks, gin sarks they'd had to sell.

But worth gets poortith an' black burning shame,
To draunt and drivel out a life at hame.
Alake! the byword's o'er weel kend throughout,
"Prophets at hame are held in nae repute;"
Sae fair'st wi' me, tho' I can heat the skin,
And set the saul upon a merry pin,
Yet I am hameil, there's the sour mischance!
I'm no frae Turkey, Italy, or France;
For now our gentles' gabbs are grown sae nice,
At thee they toot, an' never speer my price:
Witness—for thee they hight their tenants' rent,
And fill their lands wi' poortith, discontent;
Gar them o'er seas for cheaper mailins hunt,
An' leave their ain as bare's the Cairn-o'-mount.

BRANDY.

Tho' lairds take toothfu's o' my warming sap,
This dwines nor tenants' gear, nor cows their crap:
For love to you, there's mony a tenant gaes
Bare-ars'd and barefoot o'er the Highland braes:
For you nae mair the thrifty gudewife sees
Her lasses kirn, or birze the dainty cheese;
Crummie nae mair for Jenny's hand will crune
Wi' milkness dreeping frae her teats adown:
For you o'er ear the ox his fate partakes,
And fa's a victim to the bludey aix.

WHISKY.

Wha is't that gars the greedy Bankers prieve
The maiden's tocher, but the maiden's leave:
By you when spulzied o' her charming pose,
She tholes in turn the taunt o' cauldrife joes;
Wi' skelps like this fock sit but seenil down
To wether-gammond or how-towdy brown;

Sair dung wi' dule, and fley'd for coming debt,
They gar their mou'-bits wi' their incomes mett,
Content eneugh gif they ha'e wherewithal
Scrimply to tack their body and their saul.

BRANDY.

Frae some poor poet, o'er as poor a pot,
Ye've lear'd to crack sae crouse, ye haveril Scot!
Or burgher politician, that embrues
His tongue in thee, and reads the claiking news;
But waes heart for you! that for ay maun dwell
In poet's garret, or in chairman's cell,
While I shall yet on bien-clad tables stand,
Bouden wi' a' the daintiths o' the land.

WHISKY.

Troth I ha'e been 'ere now the poet's flame,
And heez'd his sangs to mony blythsome theme.
Wha was't gar'd Allie's [1] chaunter chirm fu' clear,
Life to the saul, and music to the ear:
Nae stream but kens, and can repeat the lay
To shepherds streekit on the simmer brae,
Wha to their whistle wi' the lav'rock bang,
To wauken flocks the rural fields amang.

BRANDY.

But here's the brouster-wife, and she can tell
Wha's win the day, and wha shou'd wear the bell;
Ha'e done your din, an' lat her judgment join
In final verdict 'twixt your pley and mine.

1 Allan Ramsay.
2 See Additional Notes and Illustrations to Scottish Poems, F.

LANDLADY.

In days o' yore I cou'd my living prize,
Nor faush'd wi' dolefu' gaugers or excise;
But now-a-days we're blyth to lear the thrift
Our heads 'boon licence and excise to lift:
Inlakes o' brandy we can soon supply
By whisky tinctur'd wi' the saffron's dye.
Will you your breeding threep, ye mongrel loun!
Frae hame-bred liquor dy'd to colour brown?
So flunky braw, whan drest in master's claise,
Struts to Auld Reikie's cross on sunny days,
Till some auld comerade, ablins out o' place,
Near the vain upstart shaws his meagre face;
Bumbaz'd he loups frae sight, and jooks his ken,
Fley'd to be seen amang the tassel'd train.

AN ECLOGUE.

'Twas e'ening whan the spreckled gowdspink sang,
Whan new fa'an dew in blobs o' chrystal hang;
Than Will and Sandie thought they'd wrought eneugh,
And loos'd their sair toil'd owsen frae the pleugh:
Before they ca'd their cattle to the town,[1]
The lads to draw thir breath e'en sat them down:
To the stiff sturdy aik they lean'd their backs,
While honest Sandie thus began the cracks.

SANDIE.

Yence I could hear the laverock's shrill-tun'd throat,
And listen to the clattering gowdspink's note;
Yence I cou'd whistle cantilly as they,
To owsen, as they till'd my raggit clay;

1 The farmhouse, the steading.

But now I wou'd as leive maist lend my lugs
To tuneless puddocks croakin i' the boggs;
I sigh at hame, a-field am dowie too,
To sowf a tune, I'll never crook my mou.

WILLIE.

Foul fa me gif your bridal had na been
Nae langer bygane than sin Hallow-e'en,
I cou'd hae tell'd you but a warlock's art,
That some daft lightlyin quean had stow'n your heart;
Our beasties here will take their e'ening pluck,
An' now sin Jock's gane hame the byres to muck,
Fain wou'd I houp my friend will be inclin'd
To gie me a' the secrets o' his mind:
Heh! Sandie, lad, what dool's come owr ye now,
That you to whistle ne'er will crook your mou.

SANDIE.

Ah! Willie, Willie, I may date my wae,
Frae what beted me on my bridal day;
Sair may I rue the hour in which our hands
Were knit thegither in the haly bands;
Sin that I thrave sae ill, in troth I fancy,
Some fiend or fairy, nae sae very chancy,
Has driven me by pauky wiles uncommon,
To wed this flyting fury of a woman.

WILLIE.

Ah! Sandie, aften hae I heard you tell,
Amang the lasses a' she bure the bell;
And say, the modest glances o' her ein
Far dang the brightest beauties o' the green;
You ca'd her ay sae innocent, sae young,
I thought she kent na how to use her tongue.

SANDIE.

Before I married her, I'll take my aith,
Her tongue was never louder than her breath;
But now its turn'd sae souple and sae bauld,
That Job himself cou'd scarcely thole the scauld.

WILLIE.

Lat her yelp on, be you as calm's a mouse,
Nor lat your whisht be heard into the house;
Do what she can, or be as loud's she please,
Ne'er mind her flytes but set your heart at ease,
Sit down and blaw your pipe, nor faush your thumb,
An' there's my hand she'll tire, and soon sing dumb;
Sooner shou'd winter cald confine the sea,
An' lat the sma'est o' our burns rin free;
Sooner at Yule-day shall the birk be drest,
Or birds in sapless busses big their nest,
Before a tonguey woman's noisy plea
Shou'd ever be a cause to dantan me.

SANDIE.

Weel cou'd I this abide, but oh! I fear
I'll soon be twin'd o' a' my warldly gear;
My kirnstaff now stands gizzand at the door,
My cheese-rack toom that ne'er was toom before;
My ky may now rin rowting to the hill,
And on the nakit yird their milkness spill;
She seenil lays her hand upon a turn,
Neglects the kebbuck, and forgets the kirn;
I vow my hair-mould milk would poison dogs,
As it stands lapper'd in the dirty cogs.
Before the seed I sell'd my ferra cow,
An' wi' the profit coft a stane o' woo':

I thought, by priggin, that she might hae spun
A plaidie, light, to screen me frae the sun;
But though the siller's scant, the cleedin dear,
She has na ca'd about a wheel the year.
Last ouk but ane I was frae hame a day,
Buying a threave or twa o' bedding strae:
O' ilka thing the woman had her will,
Had fouth o' meal to bake, and hens to kill;
But hyn awa' to Edinbrough scoured she
To get a making o' her fav'rite tea;[1]
And 'cause I left her not the weary clink,
She sell't the very trunchers frae my bink.

WILLIE.

Her tea! ah! wae betide sic costly gear,
Or them that ever wad the price o't spear.
Sin my auld gutcher first the warld knew,
Fouk had na fund the Indies, whare it grew.
I mind mysell, its nae sae lang sin syne,
Whan Auntie Marion did her stamack tyne,
That Davs our gardener came frae Apple-bogg,
An' gae her tea to tak by way o' drog.

SANDIE.

Whan ilka herd for cauld his fingers rubbs,
An' cakes o' ice are seen upo' the dubbs;
At morning, whan frae pleugh or fauld I come,
I'll see a braw reek rising frae my lum,
An' ablins think to get a rantin blaze
To fley the frost awa' an' toast my taes;
But whan I shoot my nose in, ten to ane
If I weelfardly see my ane hearthstane;

1 See note prefixed to poem on 'Tea.'

She round the ingle with her gimmers sits,
Crammin their gabbies wi' her nicest bits,
While the gudeman out-by maun fill his crap
Frae the milk coggie, or the parritch cap.

WILLIE.

Sandie, gif this were ony common plea,
I shou'd the lealest o' my counsel gie;
But mak or meddle betwixt man and wife,
Is what I never did in a' my life.
It's wearin on now to the tail o' May,
An' just between the bear seed and the hay;
As lang's an orrow morning may be spar'd,
Stap your wa's east the haugh, an' tell the laird;
For he's a man weel vers'd in a' the laws,
Kens baith their outs and ins, their cracks and flaws,
An' ay right gleg, whan things are out o' joint,
At sattlin o' a nice or kittle point.
But yonder's Jock,[1] he'll ca' your owsen hame,
And tak thir tidings to your thrawart dame,
That ye're awa' ae peacefu' meal to prie,
And take your supper kail or sowens wi' me.

VERSES ON VISITING DUMFRIES.

[The visit which occasioned the present sprightly verses was paid in 1773. The poet was accompanied by a Lieutenant Wilson, R. N. The two friends had *walked all the way* from the Capital to renew their acquaintance with Charles Salmon, a fellow poet, who had left Edinburgh to pursue the business of a printer with Mr. Jackson, the spirited publisher of the Dumfries Weekly Magazine. Proud of his visitor, Salmon introduced the poet to his numerous admirers in Dum-

1 See Additional Notes and Illustrations to Scottish Poems G.

fries: and Fergusson was treated with the most flattering and *over-kind* distinction. In the hour of parting, being pressed to leave some memorial of his Nithsdale 'visit,' he wrote on the instant the present 'verses.'

They were, so far as I have been able to trace, *first* published in the Life of Fergusson in the 'Lives of the Scottish Poets,' 3 vols. 12mo. London, 1822. Vol. 2d, Part IV. pp. 76—77, having been supplied to the editor by Mayne the author of the 'Siller Gun' and other excellent Doric poems. Mayne took them down at the time: and he always remembered with pleasure his 'meeting' with Fergusson, to whom in his 'Poems' he never loses an opportunity of paying a compliment.]

The gods, sure, in some canny hour,
To bonny Nith ha'e ta'en a tour,
Where bonny blinks the cawler flow'r,
Beside the stream;
And, sportive, there ha'e shawn their pow'r
In fairy dream!

Had Kirkhill[1] here but kent the gaet,
The beauties on Dumfries that wait,
He'd never turn'd his canker'd pate,
O' satire keen,
When ilka thing's sae trig and feat
To please the een.

I ken, the stirrah loo'd fu' weel
Amang the drinking loons to reel;
On claret brown or porter sweel,
Whilk he cou'd get;
After a shank o' beef he'd peel,
His craig to whet.

1 Churchill the satirist. Churchill fell in with what has been called the national ill-humour against the Scotch which arose out of the political occurrences of the commencement of the reign of George III. His 'Prophecy of Famine,' a Scotch pastoral, is a most acrimonious, yet withal vigorous caricature of Scottish disadvantages.

Marshals and Bushbys[2] then had fund
Some kitchen gude to lay the grund,
And Cheshire mites wi' skill to hund,
And fley awa'
The heart-scad, and a scud o' wund
Frae stamack raw!

Had Horace liv'd, that pleasant sinner,
Wha lov'd gude wine to synd his dinner,
His muse, though dowf, the deil be in her,
Wi' blithest sang,
The drink wad round Parnassus rin her
Ere it were lang!

Nae mair he'd sung to auld Mecænas
The blinking een o' bonny Venus;
His leave at ance he wud ha'e ta'en us
For claret here,
Which Jove and a' his gods still rain us
Frae year to year!

O! Jove, man! gie's some orro pence,
Mair siller, and a wee mair sense,
I'd big to you a rural spence,
And bide a' simmer;
And cauld frae saul and body fence
Wi' frequent brimmer!

1 The chief innkeepers in Dumfries. The descendants of the latter form the burden of several of Burns's stinging Epigrams.

TO MY AULD BREEKS.

[This poem was the last Scottish piece of Fergusson's which appeared in the 'Magazine:' and only his 'Last Will' and 'Codicil' followed. He was very soon missed in the 'poet's corner,' as appears from a Postscript to a communication in the Magazine, dated Lanark, February 7th, 1773. It is as follows: 'Pray is your agreeable poet R. F. quite sunk, or dead in law? A lady told me, if he is to write any more, she would handsomely subscribe, that he might not want a pair of new breeks.'[1] "Handsomely subscribe!" What said Robert Burns?

"My curse upon your whunstane hearts,
Ye E'nbrugh gentry!
The tythe o' what ye waste at cartes
Wad stow'd his pantry!"[2]

Now gae your wa's—Tho' anes as gude
As ever happit flesh and blude,
Yet part we maun—The case sae hard is,
Amang the writers and the bardies,
That lang they'll brook the auld I trow,
Or neibours cry, "Weel brook the new;"
Still making tight wi' tither steek,
The tither hole, the tither eik,[3]

1 Weekly Magazine, Vol. xxiii. p. 272.

2 Burns's Epistle to William Simpson 1785.

3 The Rev. James Nicol, already quoted, in an 'Address to Poverty' very forcibly fills up this picture. He personifies Poverty, and addresses him thus:

I see thee, shiverin', wrinklet, auld,
Cour owre a spunk that dies wi' cauld,
Thy claise a' patch'd, a hunder-fauld;
Yet thro' the clouts
Thy knees an' elbows, lookin bauld
The storm salutes!

Wi' ae-e'ed specks, an' that e'e crackit,
To darn thy hose thou hast the knack o't;
Now, steek on steek, they're gailie tackit;
But here's the warst o't,
Whan by thy mouldie swall'd heels rackit,
Again they'll burst out.

Vol. I. p. 48 sq.

To bang the birr o' winter's anger,
And had the hurdies out o' langer.
Sicklike some weary wight will fill
His kyte wi' drogs frae doctor's bill,
Thinking to tack the tither year
To life, and look baith haill an' fier,
Till at the lang-run death dirks in,
To birze his saul ayont his skin.
You needna wag your duds o' clouts,
Nor fa' into your dorty pouts,
To think that erst you've hain'd my tail
Frae wind and weet, frae snaw and hail,
And for reward, whan bald and hummil,
Frae garret high to dree a tumble.
For you I car'd, as lang's ye dow'd
Be lin'd wi' siller or wi' gowd:
Now to befriend, it wad be folly,
Your raggit hide an' pouches holey;
For wha but kens a poet's placks
Get mony weary flaws an' cracks,
And canna thole to hae them tint,
As he sae seenil sees the mint?
Yet round the warld keek and see,
That ithers fare as ill as thee;
For weel we lo'e the chiel we think
Can get us tick, or gie us drink,
Till o' his purse we've seen the bottom,
Then we despise, and ha'e forgot him.
Yet gratefu' hearts, to make amends,
Will ay be sorry for their friends,
And I for thee—As mony a time
Wi' you I've speel'd the braes o' rime,
Whare for the time the Muse ne'er cares
For siller, or sic guilefu' wares,

Wi' whilk we drumly grow, and crabbit,
Dowr, capernoited, thrawin gabbit,
And brither, sister, friend and fae,
Without remeid of kindred, slae.
You've seen me round the bickers reel[1]
Wi' heart as hale as temper'd steel,
And face sae apen, free and blyth,
Nor thought that sorrow there cou'd kyth;
But the niest moment this was lost,
Like gowan in December's frost.
Cou'd Prick-the-house but be sae handy
To make the breeks and claise to stand ay,
Thro' thick and thin wi' you I'd dash on,
Nor mind the folly of the fashion:
But hegh! the times *vicissitudo*
Gars ither breeks decay as you do.
Thae Macaronies, braw and windy,
Maun fail—*Sic transit gloria mundi!*
Now speed you to some madam's chaumer,
That butt an' ben rings dule an' claumer,
Ask her, in kindness, if she seeks
In hidling ways to wear the breeks?
Safe you may dwall, tho' mould and motty,
Beneath the veil o' under coatie,
For this mair faults nor yours can screen
Frae lover's quickest sense, his ein.

1 In a printed, but unpublished versified letter which Mr. Thomas Ruddiman addressed to Burns immediately on the appearance of the Kilmarnock or first edition of his poems, he makes some touching allusions to Fergusson: and in one stanza introduces the line to which this note is appended. It is as follows:

Poor Fergusson! I kent him weel,
He was a blythsome, canty chiel,
"I've seen him roun' the bickers reel"
An' lilt his sang,
An' crack his joke, sae pat an' leal,
Ye'd ne'er thocht lang.

Or if some bard in lucky times,
Shou'd profit meikle by his rhimes,
And pace awa', wi' smirky face,
In siller or in gowden lace,
Glowr in his face, like spectre gaunt,
Remind him o' his former want,
To cow his daffin and his pleasure,
And gar him live within the measure.
So Philip, it is said, who wou'd ring
O'er Macedon a just and gude king,
Fearing that power might plume his feather
And bid him stretch beyond the tether,
Ilk morning to his lug wad ca'
A tiny servant o' his ha',
To tell him to improve his span,
For Philip was, like him, a man.

AULD REIKIE.

[This poem of 'Auld Reikie' was intended to be of considerable length. The lines down to "Our New City spreads around, her bonny wings on fairy ground" were published as a small tract in 1773, as 'Canto I.' with the following modest dedication to Sir William Forbes, Baronet: "To Sir William Forbes, Baronet, this poem is most respectfully dedicated, by his most obedient and very humble servant, the Author." Dr. Irving tells us, (though without stating his authority,) that Sir William despised

"The poor ovations of a minstrel's praise,"

and that the result was, that unencouraged, the design was left incompleted. The few additions and corrections first appeared in Ruddiman's supplement to Part I. of the Poems 1779.]

Auld Reikie![1] wale o' ilka town
That Scotland kens beneath the moon;

1 This highly appropriate popular *soubriquet* cannot be traced beyond

Whare couthy chiels at e'ening meet
Their bizzing craigs and mou's to weet:
And blythly gar auld Care gae bye
Wi' blinkit and wi' bleering eye:
O'er long frae thee the Muse has been
Sae frisky on the simmer's green,
Whan flowers and gowans wont to glent
In bonny blinks upo' the bent;
But now the leaves o' yellow die,
Peel'd frae the branches, quickly fly;
And now frae nouther bush nor brier
The speckled mavis greets your ear;
Nor bonny blackbird skims and roves
To seek his love in yonder groves.

Then, Reikie, welcome! Thou canst charm
Unfleggit by the year's alarm;
Not Boreas, that sae snelly blows,
Dare here pap in his angry nose:
Thanks to our dads, whase biggin stands
A shelter to surrounding lands.

Now morn, with bonny purpie-smiles,
Kisses the air-cock o' St. Giles;
Rakin their ein, the servant lasses
Early begin their lies and clashes;
Ilk tells her friend of saddest distress,
That still she brooks frae scoulin' mistress;

the reign of Charles II. Tradition assigns the following as the origin of the phrase:—An old gentleman in Fife, designated Durham of Largo, was in the habit, at the period mentioned, of regulating the time of evening worship by the appearance of the smoke of Edinburgh, which he could easily see through the clear summer twilight, from his own door. When he observed the smoke increase in density, in consequence of the good folk of the city preparing their supper, he would call all the family into the house, saying, 'It's time now, bairns, to tak the beuks, and gang to our beds, for yonder's Auld Reikie, I see, putting on her nicht-cap!'—*Traditions of Edinburgh*, p. 147. Ed. 1847. [But query—did the good folk of the city begin to prepare their supper in the clear summer twilight? We trow not.]

And wi' her joe in turnpike stair
She'd rather snuff the stinkin' air,
As be subjected to her tongue,
When justly censur'd in the wrong.
On stair wi' tub, or pat in hand,
The barefoot housemaids loe to stand,
That antrin fock may ken how snell
Auld Reikie will at morning smell:
Then, with an inundation big as
The burn that 'neath the Nore Loch[1] brig is,
They kindly shower Edina's roses,
To quicken and regale our noses.
Now some for this, wi' satyr's leesh,
Ha'e gi'en auld Edinburgh a creesh:[2]
But without souring nocht is sweet;
The morning smells that hail our street,
Prepare, and gently lead the way
To simmer canty, braw and gay;
Edina's sons mair eithly share
Her spices and her dainties rare,
Than he that's never yet been call'd
Aff frae his plaidie or his fauld.
Now stairhead critics, senseless fools,
Censure their aim, and pride their rules,
In Luckenbooths,[3] wi' glowring eye,
Their neighbours sma'est faults descry;
If ony loun shou'd dander there,
Of aukward gate, and foreign air,

1 Drained 1820.

2 Vid. Smollett and Johnson and the graphic Letters of Mrs Winifred Jenkins, etc. etc., concerning these 'Sabæan odours,' defended with a magnanimity that should canonize our poet among the Anti-Ashley-'Cleansing' Bill dirt-lovers!

3 Just as in earlier days, when Gay and Tytler and Dick and Bennet and other 'Wits,' were wont to meet in Allan Ramay's shop in order to observe character.

They trace his steps, till they can tell
His pedigree as weel's himsell.
Whan Phœbus blinks wi' warmer ray,
And schools at noonday get the play,
Then bus'ness, weighty bus'ness, comes;
The trader glours; he doubts, he hums:
The lawyers eke to Cross repair,
Their wigs to shaw, and toss an air;
While busy agent closely plies,
And a' his kittle cases tries.
Now Night, that's cunzied chief for fun,
Is wi' her usual rites begun;
Thro' ilka gate the torches blaze,
And globes send out their blinking rays.
The usefu' cadie plies in street,
To bide the profits o' his feet;
For by thir lads Auld Reikie's fock
Ken but a sample o' the stock
O' thieves, that nightly wad oppress,
And make baith goods and gear the less.
Near him the lazy chairman stands,
And wats na how to turn his hands,
Till some daft birky, ranting fu',
Has matters somewhere else to do;
The chairman willing, gi'es his light
To deeds o' darkness and o' night:
It's never sax pence for a lift
That gars thir lads wi' fu'ness rift;
For they wi' better gear are paid,
And whores and culls support their trade.
Near some lamp-post, wi' dowy face,
Wi' heavy een, and sour grimace,
Stands she that beauty lang had kend,
Whoredom her trade, and vice her end.

But see wharenow she wuns her bread,
By that which Nature ne'er decreed;
And sings sad music to the lugs,
'Mang burachs o' damn'd whores and rogues.
Whane'er we reputation loss,
Fair chastity's transparent gloss,
Redemption seenil kens the name
But a's black misery and shame.
Frae joyous tavern, reeling drunk,
Wi' fiery phizz, and ein half sunk,
Behald the bruiser, fae to a'
That in the reek o's gardies fa':
Close by his side, a feckless race
O' macaronies shew their face,
And think they're free frae skaith or harm,
While pith befriends their leaders arm:
Yet fearfu' aften o' their maught,
They quatt the glory o' the faught
To this same warrior wha led
Thae heroes to bright honour's bed;
And aft the hack o' honour shines
In bruiser's face wi' broken lines:
Of them sad tales he tells anon,
Whan ramble and whan fighting's done;
And, like Hectorian, ne'er impairs
The brag and glory o' his sairs.
Whan feet in dirty gutters plash,
And fock to wale their fitstaps fash;
At night the macaroni drunk,
In pools or gutters aftimes sunk:
Hegh! what a fright he now appears,
Whan he his corpse dejected rears!
Look at that head, and think if there
The pomet slaister'd up his hair!

The cheeks observe, where now cou'd shine
The scancing glories o' carmine?
Ah, legs! in vain the silk-worm there
Display'd to view her eidant care;
For stink, instead of perfumes, grow,
And clarty odours fragrant flow,
Now some to porter some to punch,
Some to their wife, and some their wench,
Retire, while noisy ten-hours drum[1]
Gars a' your trades gae dandring home.
Now mony a club, jocose and free,
Gi'e a' to merriment and glee;
Wi' sang and glass, they fley the pow'r
O' care that wad harass the hour:
For wine and Bacchus still bear down
Our thrawart fortunes wildest frown:
It maks you stark, and bauld, and brave,
Ev'n whan descending to the grave.
Now some, in Pandemonium's[2] shade,
Resume the gormandizing trade;
Whare eager looks, and glancing ein,
Forespeak a heart and stamack keen.
Gang on, my lads; it's lang sin syne
We kent auld Epicurus' line;
Save you the board wad cease to rise,
Bedight wi' daintiths to the skies;

1 All the shops in the town were then (1773) shut at eight o'clock; and from that hour till ten—when the drum of the Town-Guard announced at once a sort of licence for the deluging of the street with nuisances, and a warning of the inhabitants home to their beds—unrestrained scope was given to the delights of the table. No tradesman thought of going home to his family till after he had spent an hour or two at his club. This was universal and unfailing.—*Convivalia. Traditions of Edinburgh*, p. 143 sq. Edit. 1847.

2 A social club of the period, which bore this somewhat ominous soubriquet.

And salamanders cease to swill
The comforts of a burning gill.
But chief, O Cape![1] we crave thy aid,
To get our cares and poortith laid:
Sincerity, and genius true,
Of Knights have ever been the due:
Mirth, music, porter deepest dy'd,[2]
Are never here to worth deny'd:
And health, o' happiness the queen,
Blinks bonny, wi' her smile serene.
Tho' joy maist part Auld Reikie owns,
Efftsoons she kens sad sorrows frowns;
What group is yon sae dismal grim,
Wi' horrid aspect, cleeding dim?
Says Death, They'r mine, a dowy crew,
To me they'll quickly pay their last adieu.
How come mankind, whan lacking woe,
In saulie's face their heart to show,
As if they were a clock, to tell
That grief in them had rung her bell?
Then. what is man? why a' this phraze?
Life's spunk decay'd, nae mair can blaze,
Let sober grief alone declare
Our fond anxiety and care:
Nor let the undertakers be
The only waefu' friends we see.
Come on, my muse, and then rehearse
The gloomiest theme in a' your verse:
In morning, whan ane keeks about,
Fu' blyth and free frae ail, nae doubt
He lippens not to be misled
Amang the regions of the dead;

1 This was a similar social club, concerning which see Appendix to Life of Fergusson, Note L.
2 See Additional Notes and Illustrations to Scottish Poems, H.

But straight a painted corp he sees,
Lang streekit 'neath its canopies.
Soon, soon will this his mirth controul,
And send damnation to his soul:
Or when the dead-deal, (awful shape !)
Makes frighted mankind girn and gape,
Reflection then his reason sours,
For the niest dead-deal may be ours.
Whan Sybil led the Trojan down
To haggard Pluto's dreary town,
Shapes war nor thae, I freely ween,
Cou'd never meet the soldier's ein.

If kail sae green, or herbs, delight,
Edina's street attracts the sight; [1]
Not Covent-garden, clad sae braw,
Mair fouth o' herbs can eithly shaw:
For mony a yeard is here sair sought,
That kail and cabbage may be bought;
And healthfu' sallad to regale,
Whan pamper'd wi' a heavy meal.

Glour up the street in simmer morn,
The birks sae green, and sweet brier-thorn,
Wi' spraingit flow'rs that scent the gale,
Ca' far awa' the morning smell,
Wi' which our ladies flow'r-pat's fill'd,
And every noxious vapour kill'd.

O Nature! canty, blyth and free,
Whare is there keeking-glass like thee ?
Is there on earth that can compare
Wi' Mary's shape, and Mary's air,

1 The High Street between the Tron Church and St. Giles was at that time a vegetable market.

Save the empurpled speck, that glows[1]
In the saft faulds of yonder rose?[2]
How bonny seems the virgin breast,
Whan by the lilies here carest,
And leaves the mind in doubt to tell
Which maist in sweets and hue excel?
Gillespies'[3] snuff should prime the nose
Of her that to the market goes,
If they wad like to shun the smells
That buoy up frâe market cells;
Whare wames o' paunches sav'ry scent
To nostrils gi'e great discontent.
Now wha in Albion could expect
O' cleanliness sic great neglect?
Nae Hottentot that daily lairs
'Mang tripe, or ither clarty wares,
Hath ever yet conceiv'd, or seen
Beyond the line, sic scenes unclean.
On Sunday here, an alter'd scene
O' men and manners meets our ein:
Ane wad maist trow some people chose
To change their faces wi' their clo'es,
And fain wad gar ilk neighbour think
They thirst for goodness, as for drink:
But there's an unco dearth o' grace,
That has nae mansion but the face,

1 *Var.* grows.

2 Bright as the empurpled speck that grows,
In saftest leaf o' freshest rose.
William Taylor. *Poems.* Edin. 1777. 1 vol. 8vo.

3 The Gillespies, whose snuff is celebrated by Fergusson, were two brothers, one of whom was the founder of the excellent Hospital at the head of the Links, Edinburgh. They realized a large fortune, mainly, it is said, by having had a large stock of tobacco at the breaking out of the American war. Their portraits are given in Kay, No. LXXIV. p. 218 sq. vol. II. part I, where interesting memorabilia concerning them will be found.

And never can obtain a part
In benmost corner of the heart.
Why should religion make us sad,
If good frae virtue's to be had?
Na, rather gleefu' turn your face;
Forsake hypocrisy, grimace;
And never have it understood
You fleg mankind frae being good.
In afternoon, a' brawly buskit,
The joes and lasses loe to frisk it:
Some take a great delight to place
The modest bongrace[1] o'er the face;
Tho' you may see, if so inclin'd,
The turning o' the leg behind.
Now Comeley-garden[2] and the Park[3]
Refresh them after forenoon's wark;
Newhaven, Leith, or Canonmills,[4]
Supply them in their Sunday's gills;
Whare writers often spend their pence,
To stock their heads wi' drink and sense.
While dandring cits delight to stray
To Castlehill, or public way,
Whare they nae other purpose mean,
Than that fool cause o' being seen;

1 The bongrace was a bonnet of silk and cane, in shape somewhat like a modern bonnet.—*Female Dresses of Last Century.* CHAMBERS.

2 Near Stockbridge, Edinburgh.

3 King's—Queen's Park. Note 2. p. 27.

4 A village near Edinburgh, or rather part and portion of the city, I find an allusion in one of Alexander Pennecuik's odd poems to the village as *one* mill. The grandam of the Tinklarian Doctor in 'Merry Tales for the lang nights of Winter,' is told by him that her tongue

* * ne'er lies still,
Ay grinding like the Canno-mill.

Pennecuik was contemporary with Allan Ramsay. See note 2. p. 23.

Let me to Arthur's Seat pursue,[1]
Whare bonny pastures meet the view;
And mony a wild-lorn scene accrues,
Befitting Willie Shakespeare's muse:
If Fancy there would join the thrang,
The desart rocks and hills amang,
To echoes we should lilt and play,
And gi'e to mirth the lee-lang day.

Or shou'd some canker'd biting show'r
The day and a' her sweets deflow'r,
To Holy-rood-house let me stray,
And gi'e to musing a' the day;
Lamenting what auld Scotland knew
Bien days for ever frae her view:
O Hamilton,[2] for shame! the Muse
Would pay to thee her couthy vows,
Gin ye wad tent the humble strain,
And gie's our dignity again:
For O, waes me! the thistle springs
In domicile of ancient kings,
Without a patriot, to regrete
Our palace, and our ancient state.

Blest place! whar debtors dayly run,
To rid themselves frae jail and dun;
Here, tho' sequester'd frae the din
That rings Auld Reikie's wa's within,

1 It will be remembered that "Arthur's Seat" is the title of a poem in three Cantos of Richard Gall. The reverend biographer of this sweet poet, in annotating on the couplet

"To sing the list o' beauties thrang,
That ne'er hae swell'd the poet's sang,"

states that "he has seen a descriptive poem on Arthur's Seat," but that "he cannot now (1819) recollect by what author." It was written by Mercer, author of the Sentimental Sailor, and occurs in a volume of his Poems, 4to. 1774.

2 The duke of Hamilton, hereditary keeper of the palace.

Yet they may tread the sunny braes,
And brook Apollo's cheery rays;
Glour frae St. Anthon's[1] grassy height,
O'er vales in simmer claise bedight,
Nor ever hing their head, I ween,
Wi' jealous fear o' being seen.
May I, whanever duns come nigh,
And shake my garret wi' their cry,
Scour here wi' haste, protection get,
To screen mysell frae them and debt;
To breathe the bliss of open sky,
And Simon Fraser's[2] bolts defy.
Now gin a lown should ha'e his clase
In thread-bare autumn o' their days,
St. Mary,[3] brokers' guardian saint,
Will satisfy ilk ail and want;
For mony a hungry writer there
Dives down at night, wi' cleading bare,
And quickly rises to the view
A gentleman, perfyte and new.

1 "A better site for such a building [St. Anthony's Chapel] could not have been selected: for the chapel, situated among the rude and pathless cliffs, lies in a desert, even in the immediate vicinity of a rich, populous and tumultuous capital: and the hum of the city might mingle with the orisons of the recluses, conveying as little of worldly interest as if it had been the roar of the distant ocean."—SCOTT: *Heart of Mid-lothian*, c. xv.

2 See note 1. p. 45. The vicinage of Holyrood Palace was, and is, a Sanctuary—a place of refuge for debtors, who were jestingly called Abbey-Lairds, as Jenny humorously answers the 'Cock Laird:'

The Borrowstoun merchants
Will sell ye on tick;
For we maun hae braw things,
Albeit they soud break.
When broken, frae care
The fools are set free,
When *we make them lairds*
In the Abbey, quoth she.

RAMSAY. Song: The 'Cock Laird.'

3 A mean close or street still exclusively occupied by dealers in old clothes, who continue the pests of our street-corners.

Ye rich fock, look no wi' disdain
Upon this ancient brokage lane,
For naked poets are supplied
With what you to their wants deny'd.
Peace to thy shade, thou wale o' men,
Drummond![1] relief to poortith's pain:
To thee the greatest bliss we owe,
And tribute's tear shall grateful flow:
The sick are cur'd, the hungry fed,
And dreams of comfort tend their bed:
As lang as Forth weets Lothian's shore,
As lang's on Fife her billows roar,
Sae lang shall ilk whase country's dear,
To thy remembrance gi'e a tear.
By thee Auld Reikie thrave, and grew
Delightfu' to her childer's view:
Nae mair shall Glasgow striplings threap
Their city's beauty and its shape,
While our new city spreads around
Her bonny wings on fairy ground.[2]
But provosts now that ne'er afford
The smaest dignity to lord,
Ne'er care tho' every scheme gae wild
That Drummond's sacred hand has cull'd:
The spacious brig neglected lies,[3]
Tho' plagu'd wi' pamphlets, dunn'd wi' cries;

1 George Drummond, whose name is still had in honour as a benevolent chief magistrate, whose exertions were mainly instrumental in the establishment of the present Infirmary, and extension of the city over the grounds to the north. There is a marble bust of Drummond by Nollekens in the Hall of the Royal Infirmary.

2 Here the poem as Canto I. ended: the additions first appeared in Part II. of the Poems 1779: Ruddiman's Supplement to the volume of 1773.

3 In allusion to the state of the North Bridge after its fall.—*F.* This inelegant, nay hideous bridge is still the disgrace of the first city in Europe.

They heed not tho' destruction come
To gulp us in her gaunting womb.
O shame! that safety canna claim
Protection from a provost's name,
But hidden danger lies behind
To torture and to fleg the mind;
I may as weel bid Arthur's Seat
To Berwick-law make gleg retreat,
As think that either will or art
Shall get the gate to win their heart;
For politics are a' their mark,
Bribes latent, and corruption dark:
If they can eithly turn the pence,
Wi' city's good they will dispense;
Nor care tho' a' her sons were lair'd
Ten fathom i' the auld kirk-yard.

To sing yet meikle does remain,
Undecent for a modest strain;
And since the poet's daily bread is
The favour of the Muse or ladies,
He downa like to gie offence
To delicacy's bonny sense;
Therefore the stews remain unsung,
And bawds in silence drop their tongue.

Reikie, farewell! I ne'er cou'd part
Wi' thee but wi' a dowy heart;
Aft frae the Fifan coast I've seen
Thee tow'ring on thy summit green;
So glowr the saints when first is given,
A fav'rite keek o' glore and heaven;
On earth nae mair they bend their ein,
But quick assume angelic mien;
So I on Fife wad glowr no more,
But gallop to Edina's shore.

HORACE, ODE XI. LIB. I.

Ne'er fash your thumb what gods decree
To be the weird o' you or me,
Nor deal in cantrup's kittle cunning
To speir how fast your days are running,
But patient lippen for the best,
Nor be in dowy thought opprest,
Whether we see mair winters come
Than this that spits wi' canker'd foam.

Now moisten weel your geyzan'd wa's
Wi' couthy friends and hearty blaws;
Ne'er lat your hope o'ergang your days,
For eild and thraldom never stays:
The day looks gash, toot aff your horn,
Nor care yae strae about the morn.

ADDITIONAL NOTES AND ILLUSTRATIONS.

A.—ELEGY ON GREGORY, Page 1.

Professor David Gregory of St. Andrews, the subject of this Elegy, was the son of Professor Charles Gregory, who had been appointed to the chair by Queen Anne in 1707: and filled it for thirty-two years, resigning in 1739 in favour of his son David. These Gregories were descended from a brother of the great-great-grandfather of the present respected and celebrated Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh. This was James Gregory, first of Aberdeen, and afterwards of Edinburgh, the inventor of the reflecting telescope. The following is a sketch of the descent of the families.

David Gregory of Kinairdy.

David of Edinr. and Oxford.	James of St. Andrews and Edinr.	Charles of St. Andrews.
Dr. David, Dean of Christ Ch., Oxford.	James also Professor [?]	David of St. Andrews.
		Charles.
		Mrs. Graham Died 1814, when this branch became extinct.

James Gregory.

Dr. James of Aberdeen.

Dr. John of Aberdeen and Edinburgh.

Dr. James of Edinr.

Dr. Willm. of Aberdeen. and Edinr.

Professor William Gregory, now of Edinburgh, a worthy representative of perhaps the most remarkable Family in Scotland.

Communicated by Professor Gregory and Principal Lee of Edinburgh.

B.—KING'S BIRTH-DAY, p. 15.

George Bruce, in his Poems, Ballads and Songs, 1 vol. 8vo. 1813, has 'Elegiac verses on the King's Birth-day 1812.' He apostrophizes the Muse of Fergusson, and says:

Now gin a callan throw a cracker,
Or squib, nae crime can here be blacker;
Her nainsell to the Guard will tak her,
An' pe my saul!
She'll may pe owre to Pridewell pack her,
Sax owks to dwall.

Now baudrons, ye may safely sleep,
Our callans, here, faith! daurna cheep,
For our Police sic order keep
That shou'd a kittlen,
Be thrown that day wi' glarie sweep,
They'd get a settlin'.

P. 140 sq.

C.—CITY GUARD, p. 6.

I gladly avail myself of an additional illustration of the Text from Wilson's 'Memorials of Edinburgh in the Olden Time.'

Among the more homely associations of the Old Parliament Close, the festivities of the King's birth-day demand a special notice, as perhaps the most popular among the long cherished customs of our ancestors, which the present generation has beheld gradually expire. It was usual on this annual festival to have a public repast in the Parliament Hall, where tables were laid out at the expense of the city, covered with wine and confections, and the magistrates, judges, and nearly all the chief citizens, assembled for what was styled "the drinking of the king's health." On the morning of this joyous holiday, the statue of King Charles was gaily decorated with flowers by the "Auld Callants," as the elevés of Heriot's Hospital are still termed, who claimed this office by long prescription, and their acknowledged skill in the art of loyal decoration, acquired in the annual custom of decking their own founder's statue. This formed one of the chief attractions to the citizens throughout the day, as well as to their numerous rustic visitors who crowded into the capital on the occasion, to witness or share in the fun. Towards the afternoon, the veteran corps of the City-Guard were called out to man the eastern entrance into the Parliament close while the guests were assembling for the civic entertainment, and thereafter to draw up in front of the great hall, and announce with a volley to the capital at large,

each loyal toast of its assembled rulers. Never did forlorn hope undertake a more desperate duty! The first volley of these unpopular guardians of civic order was the signal for a frenzied assault on them by the whole rabble of the town, commemorated in Fergusson's 'King's Birth-day.' Dead dogs and cats, and every offensive missile that could be procured for the occasion, were now hurled at their devoted heads, and when at last they received orders to march back again to their old citadel in the High Street, the strife became furious: the rough old veterans dealt their blows right and left with musket and Lochaber axe wielded by no gentle hand, but their efforts were hopeless against the spirit and numbers of their enemies, and the retreat generally ended in an ignominious route of the whole civic guard, &c. &c. Vol. I. p. 218 sq. See Additional Notes and Illustrations B.

D.—CITY GUARD, p. 14.

This redoubtable corps having no Historian, I make no excuse for still further illustrating the text from Scott. Writing in the Heart of Midlothian in 1817 he says, "Of late, the gradual diminution of these civic soldiers reminds one of the abatement of King Lear's hundred Knights. The edicts of each set of succeeding magistrates have, like those of Goneril and Regan, diminished this venerable band with similar question—'What need have we of five-and-twenty? ten?—five?' and now it is nearly come to, 'What need we one?' A spectre may indeed here and there still be seen of an old gray-headed and gray-bearded Highlander, with war-worn features, but bent double by age; dressed in an old-fashioned cocked-hat, bound with white tape instead of silver lace, and in coat, waistcoat, and breeches of a muddy-coloured red; bearing in his withered hand an ancient weapon called a Lochaber axe; a long pole, namely, with an axe at the extremity, and a hook at the back of the hatchet. Such a phantom of former days still creeps, I have been informed, round the statue of Charles II. in the Parliament Square, as if the image of a Stuart were the last refuge for any memorial of our ancient manners," &c. At the close of this very year, the 'What need we one?' was asked, and answered in the negative; and the corps was accordingly dissolved. "Their last march to do duty at Hallow Fair had something in it affecting. Their drums and fifes had

been wont, in better days, to play on this joyous occasion the lively tune of:

'Jockey to the fair;'

but on this final occasion, the afflicted veterans moved slowly to the dirge of:

'The last time I came owre the muir.'"

Waverley Annotations, i. 435.

The half-serious pathos of Scott, says Chambers, regarding this corps, becomes wholly so, when we learn that a couple of members survived, to make what will perhaps prove an actual last public appearance, in the procession which consecrated his richly deserved monument, August 15th, 1840.

E.—Page 114.

Cairn-o' mount, or Cairniemount, a lofty Grampian mountain, lying on the south bank of the Dee, Kincardineshire, celebrated as well in Scottish history as in song, on account of the road between the great districts of Angus and Moray, which passes over it.

F.—DRINK ECLOGUE, p. 115, line 3 from bottom.

The leader of a sheep-flock 'wears' or 'bears' a bell on his neck which directs his fleecy harem in the event of their straying. The tinkling of the little 'bell' in the silence of the sheep-tracks among the Highland hills is peculiarly striking.

G.—ECLOGUE, p. 120.

This Jock is the 'herd,' and as the herd is very frequently mentioned by Fergusson, it cannot be out of place to insert in this additional Note some particulars concerning 'Herds.' I do so the more willingly as I shall have occasion thereby as well to elucidate and illustrate Burns as Fergusson.

The 'herd laddie or callant,' as he was sometimes called, usually entered to his service about the middle of March or thereby, not to *herd* (for milk cows are rarely turned out to pasture till the "Beltane win bla's" or about the 1st of May) but to 'drive the harrows,' i. e. to drive a horse or pair of horses in harrowing the land. When not employed in such occupations his business is (or was) to fodder the cattle, drive

them out to water, help to 'muck the byre,' to 'redd the barn' ('bottle' the straw during the time the thrashers are at work), run errands, and make himself generally useful; in a word, the 'Herd' is a drudge to every one about a farm-house. If however he be a boy of some discretion and shrewdness, his situation is seldom uncomfortable, for he necessarily knows a good deal of the love affairs of the young women about the house, and frequently something of those of the young men. Does the dog bark at night, the duty of the 'herd laddie is to rin to the door' and see what he is barking at: if he understands his position he will come back and report "naething ava," but by and by a sly sidelong glance given to one or other of the 'lassies' expresses something very different.

He is often useful to the 'lads' too, for he is sometimes employed by them to carry a message to their 'sweethearts,' or to run some little errand for them after 'night fa',' so that most of the young folks find it to be their interest 'to keep in wi' the herd callant;' and if he be a 'bit clever, manfu', biddable thing, that does not stay his errand,' he may reckon on the friendship and protection of both the 'Gudewife and Gudeman.'

When the cattle are 'morninged' (turned out in the morning to pasture), in May as stated, with his *club* and (formerly) *touting-horn*, the Herd is sent out along with them. If he be a 'thrifty thing,' he will have his stocking (a stocking to knit) along with him: or if otherwise a book or a ballad.

The morning's 'hirsel' is commonly near the Steading, so that in this case he is seldom within 'speaking reach' of a neighbour herd, but should any one's cattle, within sight, be making their way to the growing grain, he instantly mounts the highest hillock near him, and swings his club about his head and sings out with a peculiar cadence:

Holloa—holloa hey ho, hey ho, hey ho,
A Tammy Tramp's kye's in the corn—hollo!

Very likely in a short time afterwards his neighbour has occasion to retaliate with:

Herdie birdie blaw your horn,
A' your kye's in the corn,
The kye's in the corn, the sheep in the bere, [barley]
The herd will be hangit afore the neist year.

In the after-part of the day the cattle are usually sent to the 'outfield hirsel,' and there the herd passes the time with others

of his own age and calling in some amusement or other till it is time to 'drive the kye hame:' and in this way the summer is spent.

I proceed to elucidate Burns in connection with the herd. The herd's club and touting horn have long been in many places in desuetude: but Burns, in his 'Twa herds' refers to both:

> 'He fine a mangy sheep could scrub,
> Or nobly fling the gospel club,
> * * *
> The twa best herds in a' the wast
> That ere gae'd gospel's horn a blast'

It may well be doubted if there is one in five hundred of his readers who understands the objects to which he alludes in these lines. The club was a short thick stick with a large knob at the end which adapted it well for 'flinging,' and for this it was used. The horn was a large horn, such as may be seen on the head of a West Highland bullock, but not so small. Although few farmers possessing large farms were without a 'touting horn,' yet I have never seen nor heard of what use it was to the herd, unless perhaps to call off the dog from 'hounding the cattle' when out of reach of the herd's voice.

H.—AULD REIKIE, p. 132.

This allusion to the Cape Club appears to have been the subject of humorous accusation against the poet. He was himself a member of it. Mr. Laing of the Writers to the Signet's Library has furnished me with a poetical 'Summons' in the holograph of Fergusson, which apparently respects the text:

> To Jeemy Neehum, our Recorder,
> Heralds and purs'vants of that order,
> Whereas 'tis meant and shewn to me
> This month of August seventy-three
> That some unlicensed prying blades
> Of late have occupied the Shades,
> The like in future to prevent
> It is our sov-er-eign intent
> That from this month of August so forth,
> You shall debar all Knights of no worth,

By'lock-fast doors at noon-tide hours,
To keep it from the rascal's powers.
Therefore I charge you that ye summon
Precentor,[1] base born son of woman,
To answer in the hour of cause
For open insult to our laws,
Likeas ordain him to depone
If he has lybell's, any one
Containing treasonable rhymes
Or other treasonable crimes
Which he has issued 'gainst the Shades
And all our bumper-drinking blades,
All things before said which to do
We hereby do commit to you
As all of you and every one
Shall answer to us thereupon.

I.—King's birth-day in Edinburgh, p. 15, Stanza 1st.

The following quotation from one of the inimitable Essays of Goldsmith affords a laughable illustration of the text. "In the midst of these pleasing reflections, as I was proceeding with a stately pace, and with all the solemnity of a newly-acquired and conscious dignity, I heard a hissing noise in one of the tails of my wig, and looking about, soon perceived a stream of fire dashing from my right ear. I fled, it followed: I shook my head; it was pinned too close to be shook off, and just as I arrived at George's, it went off in a bounce."

J.—Answer to Mr. J. S's. Epistle, p. 24.

"*And frae ilk corner*," &c.

I had resolved on the omission of these two stanzas, and a stray expression in other of the poems; but I have been constrained to suffer the author's language to appear in the text; and now have no other apology to offer to those who may expect one, than to express my regret that Fergusson should have used such expressions; and that, in the words of the Editor of Tyndale, "the taste and decision of the literary world, in its present state of refinement [?] should not allow an editor the privileges of a common scavenger in removing the filth which past ages have left behind them."

1 'Precentor' was the club-title of Fergusson. See note 2, p. 131.

POEMS IN ENGLISH.

SONGS FROM 'ARTAXERXES.'

[The 'Opera' in which the following 'Songs' were inserted, (the first productions of Fergusson,) was entitled "Artaxerxes, an English Opera, as it is performed at the Theatre-Royal, Edinburgh. The Music composed by Tho. Aug. Arne. Mus. Doc. With the addition of Three Favourite Scots Airs. The words by Mr. R. Fergusson. Edinburgh. Printed by Martin and Wotherspoon. MDCCLXIX. [Price Sixpence]." This is none other than a most wretched translation of the beautiful Play of 'Artaxerxes' by Metastasio. The 'Songs' of Fergusson are ingeniously equal in inaninity, and it must only have been from the Artistes, who were Mr. and Madame Tenducci and an excellent Company, that either the Play itself or the Songs proved acceptable to the public.

I give these Songs merely as curiosities in respect of their being among the first lispings in rhyme of our Poet. They lose, of course, somewhat of their [little] interest from their disjunction from the text, but it can matter little, as I repeat, Opera and Songs are harmoniously despicable. I am indebted to Mr. Laing of the Signet Library for directing my attention to these Songs.]

From ACT II. *Scene* 2.

TUNE.—*Braes of Balandine.*[1]

ARBACES [Tenducci.]

By Heav'n's displeasure the wretch thus is thrown,
With tempests harsh-sounding, on seas, yet unknown;

1 Ballenden. These braes lie towards the Sidlaw Hills, in the Carse of Gowrie.

In vain, thus surrounded, he struggles with death,
When toss'd by huge billows, and panting for breath;
Even hope too, forsakes him, no pity he craves;
He's left, without mercy, the sport of the waves.

From Act II. *Scene* 6.

Tune.—*Roslin Castle.*

Mandane [Madame Tenducci.]

What doubts oppress my wounded heart!
My soul at every breath doth start!
Fain would my gloomy thoughts retire,
Nor fill my stormy breast with ire:
Yet cares torment my tortur'd mind,
Leaving their rugged tracts behind;
And still my soul they hold in pain,
Their cruel empire to maintain.

From Act III. *Scene* 7.

Tune.—*Lochaber no more.*

Enter Arbaces [Tenducci.]

O where shall I wander my lover to find,
And with sweet discourses indulge my fond mind?
Once more I must view her before I depart,
And with mild embraces enliven my heart.
Perchance she's approaching that smooth-gliding stream,
Where I first espy'd and discover'd my flame:
Farewell then my sorrows, I'll leave you a while,
And steal from my true love one ravishing smile.

These 'Songs' were not included by Fergusson in his own Volume of 1773.

ODE TO HOPE.

Hope! lively chearer of the mind,
In lieu of real bliss design'd,
Come from thy ever verdant bow'r
To chase the dull and ling'ring hour;
O! bring, attending on thy reign,
All thy ideal fairy train,
To animate the lifeless clay,
And bear my sorrows hence away.

Hence gloomy featur'd black Despair,
With all thy frantic furies fly,
Nor rend my breast with gnawing care,
For Hope in lively garb is nigh;

Let pining Discontentment mourn,
Let dull ey'd Melancholy grieve,
Since pleasing Hope must reign by turn,
And ev'ry bitter thought relieve.

O smiling Hope! in adverse hour,
I feel thy influencing power;
Tho' frowning Fortune fix my lot,
In some defenceless lonely cot,
Where Poverty, with empty hands,
In pallid meagre aspect stands;
Thou can'st enrobe me, 'midst the great,
With all the crimson pomp of state,
Where Luxury invites his guests
To pall them with his lavish feasts:
What cave so dark, what gloom so drear,
So black with horror, dead with fear!

But thou can'st dart thy streaming ray,
And change close night to open day.

Health is attendant in thy radiant train,
Round her the whisp'ring zephyrs gently play,
Behold her gladly tripping o'er the plain,
Bedeck'd with rural sweets and garlands gay.

When vital spirits are depress'd,
And heavy languor clogs the breast,
Comforting Hope! 'tis thine to cure,
Devoid of Esculapian power;
For oft thy friendly aid avails,
When all the strength of physic fails.

Nay, even though death should aim his dart,
I know he lifts his arm in vain,
Since thou this lesson can'st impart,
Mankind but die to live again.

Depriv'd of thee must banners fall;
But where a living Hope is found,
The legions shout at danger's call,
And victors are triumphant crown'd.

Come then, bright Hope! in smiles array'd,
Revive us by thy quick'ning breath,
Then shall we never be afraid
To walk thro' danger, and thro' death.

A TALE.

Those rigid pedagogues and fools,
Who walk by self-invented rules,
Do often try, with empty head,
The emptier mortals to mislead,
And fain would urge, that none but they
Could rightly teach the A, B, C,
On which they've got an endless comment,
To trifling minds of mighty moment,
Throwing forth[1] barriers in the way
Of those who genius display,
As often, ah! too often, teaze
Them out of patience, and of fees,
Before they're able to explode
Obstructions thrown on Learning's road.
May mankind all employ their tools
To banish pedantry from schools!
And may each pedagogue avail,
By list'ning to the after tale!

Wise Mr. Birch had long intended
The alphabet should be amended,
And taught that H a breathing was,
Ergo he saw no proper cause
Why such a letter should exist:
Thus in a breath was he dismiss'd,
With, "O beware, beware, O youth!
Take not the villain in your mouth."

One day this alphabetic sinner
Was eager to devour his dinner,

1 *Var.* such.

When to appease the craving glutton,
His boy Tom produc'd the mutton,
Was such disaster ever told ?
Alas! the meat was deadly cold!
Here take and h—eat it, says the master;
Quoth Tom, that shall be done, and fast, Sir:
And few there are who will dispute it,
But he went instantly about it;
For Birch had scorn'd the H to say,
And blew him with a puff away.

The bell was rung with dread alarm;
" Bring me the mutton, is it warm ?"
Sir, you desir'd, and I have eat it;
" You lie, my orders were to heat it."
Quoth Tom, I'll readily allow
That H is but a breathing now.

ON BEING ASKED WHICH OF THREE SISTERS WAS THE MOST BEAUTIFUL.

When Paris gave his voice, in Ida's grove, [1]
For the resistless Venus, queen of love,
'Twas no great task to pass a judgment there,
Where she alone was exquisitely fair;
But here what could his ablest judgment teach,
When wisdom, power, and beauty reign in each;
The youth, nonpluss'd, behov'd to join with me,
And wish the apple had been cut in three.

1 Euripides. Iphig. Aul. 1302. 1298: Pausan: V. 19. § 1. Homer Il. xxiv: 25. 29. &c. &c.

THE RIVERS OF SCOTLAND.

AN ODE.

Set to Music by Mr. [Richard] Collett.

[Richard Collett was an English violin-player, and is recorded by Dr. Burney as having had a good tone, and a strong hand, but without either taste or knowledge of music, and only a coarse performer. He played the first violin at Vauxhall in the summer of 1745. No doubt, writes the accomplished George Farquhar Graham, Esq. to the Editor, "this is the Collett who set the Ode of Fergusson to music. There is no record of any other English musician of that name in the 18th century. His music must be worthless." I have never been able to discover this Ode with the Music of Collett.]

O'ER Scotia's parched land the Naiads flew,
From towering hills explor'd her shelter'd vales,
Caus'd Forth in wild meanders please the view,
And lift her waters to the zephyr's gales;
Where the glad swain surveys his fertile fields,
And reaps the plenty which his harvest yields.

Here did those lovely nymphs, unseen,
Oft wander by the river's side,
And oft unbind their tresses green,
To bathe them in the fluid tide;

Then to the shady grottos would retire,
And sweetly echo to the warbling choir;

Or to the rushing waters tune their shells
To call up echo from the woods,
Or from the rocks, or crystal floods,
Or from surrounding banks, or hills, or dales.

CHORUS.

Or to the rushing waters tune their shells
To call up echo from the woods,
Or from the rocks or crystal floods,
Or from surrounding banks, or hills, or dales.

When the cool fountains first their springs forsook,
Murmuring smoothly to the azure main,
Exulting Neptune then his trident shook,
And wav'd his waters gently to the plain.

The friendly Tritons on his chariot borne,
With cheeks dilated blew the hollow-sounding horn.

Now Lothian and Fifan shores,
Resounding to the mermaid's song,
Gladly emit their limpid stores,
And bid them smoothly sail along

To Neptune's empire, and with him to roll
Round the revolving sphere from pole to pole;

To guard Britannia from envious foes,
To view her angry vengeance hurl'd
In awful thunder round the world,
And trembling nations bending to her blows.

CHORUS.

To guard Britannia from envious foes,
To view her angry vengeance hurl'd
In awful thunder round the world,
And trembling nations bending to her blows.

High towering on the zephyr's breezy wing,
Swift fly the Naiades from Fortha's shores,

And to the southern airy mountains bring
Their sweet enchantment and their magic powers.

Each nymph her favourite willow takes,
The earth with fev'rous tremor shakes,
The stagnant lakes obey their call,
Streams o'er the grassy pastures fall.

Tweed spreads her waters to the lucid ray,
Upon the dimpled surf the sun-beams play:

On her green banks the tuneful shepherd lies,
Charm'd with the music of his reed,
Amidst the wavings of the Tweed:
From sky-reflecting streams the river nymphs arise.

CHORUS.

On her green banks the tuneful shepherd lies,
Charm'd with the music of his reed,
Amidst the wavings of the Tweed:
From sky-reflecting streams the river nymphs arise.

The list'ning muses heard the shepherd play,
Fame with her brazen trump proclaim'd his name,
And to attend the easy graceful lay,
Pan from Arcadia to Tweeda came.

Fond of the change, along the banks he stray'd,
And sung unmindful of th' Arcadian shade.

AIR—*Tweedside.*

1.

Attend every fanciful swain,
Whose notes softly flow from the reed,

With harmony guide the sweet strain,
To sing of the beauties of Tweed.

2.

Where the music of woods and of streams
In soothing sweet melody join,
To enliven your pastoral themes,
And make human numbers divine.

CHORUS.

Ye warblers from the vocal grove,
The tender woodland strain approve,
While Tweed in smoother cadence glides,
O'er flow'ry vales in gentle tides ;
And as she rolls her silver waves along,
Murmurs and sighs to quit the rural song.
Scotia's great Genius in russet clad,
From the cool sedgy bank exalts her head,
In joyful rapture she the change espies,
Sees living streams descend and groves arise.

AIR—*Gilderoy.*

1.

As sable clouds at early day
Oft dim the shining skies,
So gloomy thoughts create dismay,
And lustre leaves her eyes.

2.

" Ye powers! are Scotia's ample fields
" With so much beauty grac'd,
" To have those sweets your bounty yields
" By foreign foes defac'd?

3.

"O Jove! at whose supreme command
"The limpid fountains play,
"O'er Caledonia's northern land,[1]
"Let restless waters stray.

4.

"Since from the void creation rose,
"Thou'st made a sacred vow,
"That Caledon to foreign foes
"Should ne'er be known to bow."

The mighty Thund'rer on his sapphire throne,
In mercy's robes attir'd, heard the sweet voice
Of female woe—soft as the moving song
Of Philomela 'midst the evening shades;
And thus return'd an answer to her pray'rs:

"Where birks at Nature's call arise;
"Where fragrance hails the vaulted skies;
"Where my own oak its umbrage spreads,
"Delightful 'midst the woody shades;
"Where ivy mould'ring rocks entwines;
"Where breezes bend the lofty pines:
"There shall the laughing Naiads stray,
"'Midst the sweet banks of winding Tay."

From the dark womb of earth Tay's waters spring,
Ordain'd by Jove's unalterable voice;
The sounding lyre celestial muses string,
The choiring songsters in the groves rejoice.

1 Though Scotland and Caledonia are generally held as synonymous terms, yet there is a distinction: For of old, when the Picts inhabited this country, that part of it was only called Caledonia which lay to the northward of the Tay, which river is said to have been the boundary of the Roman Conquests.—*F.*

Each fount its crystal fluids pours,
Which from surrounding mountains flow;
The river bathes its verdant shores,
Cool o'er the surf the breezes blow.

Let England's sons extol their gardens fair,
Scotland may freely boast her gen'rous streams,
Their soil more fertile and their milder air,
Her fishes sporting in the solar beams.

Thames, Humber, Severn, all must yield the bay
To the pure streams of Forth, of Tweed, and Tay.

CHORUS.

Thames, Humber, Severn, all must yield the bay
To the pure streams of Forth, of Tweed, and Tay.

O Scotia! when such beauty claims
A mansion near thy flowing streams,
Ne'er shall stern Mars, in iron car,
Drive his proud coursers to the war:
But fairy forms shall strew around
Their olives on the peaceful ground;
And turtles join the warbling throng,
To usher in the morning song.
Or shout in chorus all the live-long day,
From the green banks of Forth, of Tweed, and Tay.

When gentle Phœbe's friendly light
In silver radiance clothes the night;
Still music's ever varying strains
Shall tell the lovers, Cynthia reigns;
And woo them to her midnight bowers,
Among the fragrant dew-clad flowers,

Where every rock, and hill, and dale,
With echoes greet the nightingale,
Whose pleasing, soft, pathetic tongue,
To kind condolence turns the song;

And often wins the love-sick swain to stray
To hear the tender variegated lay,
Thro' the dark woods of Forth, of Tweed, and Tay.

Hail, native streams, and native groves!
Oozy caverns, green alcoves!
Retreats for Cytherea's reign,
With all the graces in her train.
Hail, Fancy, thou whose ray so bright
Dispels the glimmering taper's light!
Come in aerial vesture blue,
Ever pleasing, ever new,
In these recesses deign to dwell
With me in yonder moss-clad cell:

Then shall my reed successful tune the lay,
In numbers wildly warbling as they stray
Thro' the glad banks of Fortha, Tweed, and Tay.

PASTORALS.

[These Pastorals appeared anonymously in the 'Weekly Magazine' with the following note prefixed:—"We have been favoured with three Pastorals, under the titles of Morning, Noon, and Night, written by a young Gentleman of this place, the style of which appears as natural and picturesque as that of any of the modern ones hitherto published." These Pastorals, with the exception of the Songs in the Opera of 'Artaxerxes,' [1769] were the first published productions of

Fergusson. Those English poems which precede them in this Volume appear however to have been earlier composed, as they are placed by the poet himself in the Volume of 1773, in which they originally appeared, *before the Pastorals.*]

PASTORAL I.—MORNING.

DAMON AND ALEXIS.

DAMON.

See Pentland's rocky cliffs begin to blaze;[1]
Stern darkness flies before Aurora's rays;[2]
Cool circling breezes whirl along the air,
And early shepherds to the fields repair.
Lead we our flocks then to the mountain's brow,
Where junipers and thorny brambles grow;
Where fonts of water 'midst the violets[3] spring
And soaring larks with cheerful[4] linnets sing·
Your pleasing song shall teach our flocks to stray,
While sounding echoes smooth the sylvan lay.

ALEXIS.

'Tis thine to sing the graces of the morn,
The zephyr trembling o'er the rip'ning corn;
'Tis thine with ease to chant the rural lay,
While bubbling fountains to your numbers play;
No piping swain that treads the verdant field,
But to your music, and your verse must yield;
Sing then, for here we may with safety keep
Our sportive lambkins on this mossy steep.

DAMON.

With ruddy glow the sun adorns the land;
The pearly dew-drops on the bushes stand;

1 *Var.* Aurora now her welcome visit pays.
2 *Var.* her cheerful rays. 3 *Var.* daisies. 4 *Var.* and tuneful.

The lowing oxen through the folds we hear,
And snowy flocks upon the hills appear.

ALEXIS.

How sweet the murmurs of that [1] neighb'ring rill!
Sweet are the slumbers which its streams [2] distil;
Through pebbly channels winding as they run,
And brilliant sparkling to the rising sun.

DAMON.

Behold Edina's lofty turrets rise,
Her structures fair adorn the eastern skies;
As Pentland cliffs o'ertop yon distant plain,
So she the cities on our north domain.

ALEXIS.

Boast not of cities, or of lofty towers,
Where discord all her baneful influence pours;
The homely cottage and the wither'd tree,
With sweet content, shall be preferr'd by me.

DAMON.

The hemlock dire shall please the heifer's taste;
Our lands, like wild Arabia, be waste;
The bee forget to range for winter food,
Ere I forsake the forest and the flood.

ALEXIS.

Ye balmy breezes, wave the verdant field,
Clouds, all your bounties, all your moisture yield,
That fruits and herbage may our farms adorn,
And furrow'd ridges teem with loaded corn.

1 *Var.* the. 2 *Var.* floods.

DAMON.

The year already hath propitious smil'd,
Gentle in spring-time, and in summer mild;
No cutting blasts have hurt my tender dams,
Nor hoary frosts destroy'd my infant lambs.

ALEXIS.

If Ceres crown with joy the bounteous year,
A sacred altar to her shrine I'll rear;
A vigorous ram shall bleed, whose circling horns,
His hardy front [1] and woolly neck [2] adorns.

DAMON.

Teach me, O Pan, to tune the slender reed,
No fav'rite ram shall at thine altars bleed;
Each breathing morn thy woodland verse I'll sing, [3]
And hollow dens shall with the numbers ring.

ALEXIS.

Apollo, lend me thy celestial lyre,
The woods in concert join at thy desire;
At morn, at noon, at night, I'll tune the lay,
And bid fleet echo bear the sound away.

DAMON.

Sweet are the breezes when cool eve returns,
To lowing herds when raging Sirius burns;
Not half so sweetly winds the breeze along,
As does the murmur of your pleasing song.

ALEXIS.

To hear your strains the cattle spurn their food,
The feather'd songsters leave their tender brood;

1 *Var.* woolly neck. 2 *Var.* hardy front. 3 *Var.* I will thy verses sing.

Around your seat [1] the silent lambs advance,
While scrambling he-goats on the mountains dance.

DAMON.

But haste, Alexis, reach yon leafy shade,
Which ivy mantling round the oaks hath made,
There we'll retire, and list the warbling note,
That flows melodious from the blackbird's throat;
Your easy numbers shall his songs inspire,
And every warbler join the gen'ral choir.

PASTORAL II.—NOON.

CORYDON, TIMANTHES.

CORYDON.

The sun the summit of his orb hath gain'd,
No flecker'd clouds his azure path hath stain'd;
Our pregnant ewes around us cease to graze,
Stung with the keenness of his sultry rays.
The weary bullock from the yoke is led,
And youthful shepherds from the plains are fled,
To dusky shades, where scarce a glimmering ray
Can dart its lustre, for the twining spray. [2]
Yon cooling riv'let where the waters gleam,
Where springing flowers adorn the limpid stream,
Invites us where the tender willow grows,
To guide our flocks and take our sweet repose. [3]

TIMANTHES.

To thy advice a grateful ear I'll lend,
The shades I'll court where slender osiers bend;

1 *Var.* shrine. 2 *Var.* through the leafy spray.
3 *Var.* take a cool repose.

My [1] weanlings young shall crop the rising flow'r,
While we retire to yonder leafy [2] bow'r;
The woods shall echo back thy cheerful strains,
Admir'd by all our [3] Caledonian swains.

CORYDON.

There have I oft with gentle Delia stray'd,
Amidst th' embow'ring solitary shade,
Before the gods to thwart my wishes strove,
By blasting every pleasing glimpse of love;
For Delia wanders through the Anglian plains,
Where civil discord and sedition reigns.
There Scotia's sons in odious lights appear,
Though we for them have waved the hostile spear;
For them my sire, enwrapp'd in curdled gore,
Breathed his last moments on a foreign shore.

TIMANTHES.

Six lunar months, my friend, will soon expire,
And she return to crown your fond desire:
For her O rack not your desponding mind!
In Delia's breast a gen'rous [4] flame's confin'd,
That burns for Corydon, whose piping lay
Hath caused the tedious moments steal away,
Whose strains harmonious [5] moved the falling floods
To whisper Delia through [6] the rising woods. [7]

CORYDON.

Oft have I sung the blushes of the morn,
When fair Aurora did the east adorn;

1 *Var.* our. 2 *Var.* twining. 3 *Var.* the. 4 *Var.* raging.
5 *Var.* melodious. 6 *Var.* to.
7 The lines of Corydon, 'Oft have I sung, &c.' which immediately follow, were errantly omitted in the volume 1773. They are here restored for the first time from the original.

But oft'ner sung my constant Delia's praise,
Her blush more comely than Aurora's rays.

TIMANTHES.

But could your sighs increase [1] the floating gales
That favourable swell their lofty sails,
Ne'er should your sobs their rapid flights give o'er,
Till Delia's presence grac'd our northern shore.

CORYDON.

Though Delia greet my love, I sigh in vain,
Such joy unbounded can I ne'er obtain ;
Her sire a thousand fleeces numbers o'er,
And grassy hills increase his milky store,
While the weak fences of a scanty fold,
Will all my sheep and fatt'ning lambkins hold.

TIMANTHES.

Ah, hapless youth! although the early muse,
Painted her semblance on thy youthful brows;
Though she with laurels twin'd thy témples round
And in thy ear distill'd the magic sound,
A cheerless poverty attends your woes,
Your song melodious unrewarded flows.

CORYDON.

Think not, Timanthes, that for wealth I pine,
Though all the fates to make me poor combine;
Tay bounding o'er his banks with awful [2] sway,
Bore all my corns and all my flocks away.
Of Jove's dread precepts did I ne'er [3] complain,
Ne'er curs'd [4] the rapid flood nor dashing rain;

1 *Var* O! if your sighs could aid.
2 *Var.* awless.
3 *Var.* e'er.
4 *Var.* E'er curs'd.

Ev'n now I sigh not for my former store,
But wish the gods had destin'd Delia poor.

TIMANTHES.

'Tis joy, my friend, to think I can repay
The loss you bore by rigid Autumn's sway;
Yon fertile meadow, where the daisies spring,
Shall yearly pasture to your heifers bring;
Your lambs [1] with mine shall on yon mountain feed,
Cheer'd by the warbling of your tuneful reed.
No more shall Delia's ever fretful sire,
Against your hopes and generous love conspire;
Fir'd by her smiles, you'll tune the early [2] lay,
While hills responsive waft your songs away.

CORYDON.

May plenteous crops your irksome labour crown,
And hoodwink'd fortune cease her envious frown;
May growing wealth increase [3] with growing years,
Your flocks be num'rous as your silver hairs.

TIMANTHES.

But lo! the heats invite us, at our ease,
To court the twining shades and cooling breeze;
Our languid joints we'll there at peace recline,
And midst the flow'rs and op'ning blossoms dine.

1 *Var.* flock. 2 *Var.* happy. 3 *Var.* may riches still increase.

PASTORAL III.—NIGHT.

AMYNTAS, FLORELLUS.

AMYNTAS.

While yet grey twilight does his empire hold,
Drive all our heifers to the peaceful fold;
With sullied wing grim darkness soars along,
And larks to nightingales resign the song.

FLORELLUS.

The weary ploughman [1] flies the waving fields,
To taste what fare his humble cottage yields,
As bees that daily through the meadows roam,
Feed on the sweets they have prepared at home.

AMYNTAS.

What awful silence reigns throughout the shade,
The peaceful olive bends his drooping head;
No sounds are heard throughout the gloomy maze,
Wide o'er the deep the fiery meteors blaze.

FLORELLUS.

The grassy meads that smil'd serenely gay,
Cheer'd by the everburning lamp of day,
In dusky hue attir'd are cramp'd with colds,
And springing flowrets shut their crimson folds.

AMYNTAS.

The west, yet ting'd with Sol's effulgent ray,
With feeble light illumes our homeward way;

1 I retain the 'dialogue' of the Original. It was mis-arranged in the volume 1773, and in every subsequent edition.

The glowing stars with keener lustre burn,
While round the earth their fiery axles turn.

FLORELLUS.

What mighty power conducts the stars on high?
Who bids these comets through our system fly?
Who wafts the lightning to the icy pole,
And through our regions makes[1] his thunders roll?

AMYNTAS.

But say, what mightier power from nought could raise
The earth, the sun, and all that fiery maze
Of distant stars, that gild our ev'ning sky,[2]
And through the void in settled orbits fly.

FLORELLUS.

That righteous Power, before whose heav'nly eye
The stars are nothing, and the planets die;
Whose breath divine supports our mortal frame,
Who form'd[3] the lion wild and lambkin tame.

AMYNTAS.

At his command the bounteous spring returns,
Hot summer, raging o'er th' Atlantic burns,
The yellow autumn crowns our sultry toil,
And winter's snows prepare the cumbrous soil.

FLORELLUS.

By him the morning darts her purple ray,
To him the birds their early homage pay;
With vocal harmony the meadows ring,
While swains in concert heav'nly praises sing.

1 *Var.* bids. 2 *Var.* the azure sky. 3 *Var.* made.

AMYNTAS.

Sway'd by his word the nutrient dews descend,
And growing pastures to the moisture bend;
The vernal blossoms sip his falling show'rs,
The meads are garnish'd with his opening [1] flow'rs.

FLORELLUS.

For man, the object of his chiefest care,
Fowls he hath form'd to wing the ambient air;
For him the steer his lusty neck must [2] bend,
Fishes for him their scaly fins extend.

AMYNTAS.

Wide o'er the orient sky the moon appears,
A foe to darkness, and its gloomy [3] fears;
Around her orb the stars in clusters shine,
And distant planets tend her silver shrine.

FLORELLUS.

Hush'd are the busy numbers of the day,
On downy couch they sleep their hours away.
Hail, balmy sleep! that soothes the troubled mind;
Lock'd in thy arms our cares a refuge find;
Oft do you tempt us with delusive dreams
When wildring fancy darts her dazzling beams;
Asleep the lover with his mistress strays
Through leafy [4] thickets, and untrodden ways;
But when pale Cynthia's sable empire's fled,
And hov'ring slumbers shun the morning bed,
Rous'd by the dawn, he wakes with frequent sigh,
And all his flatt'ring visions quickly fly.

1 *Var.* ripening. 2 *Var.* doth. 3 *Var.* idle. 4 *Var.* lonely

AMYNTAS.

Now owls and bats infest the midnight scene!
Dire snakes, envenom'd, twine along the green;
Forsook by man the rivers mourning glide,
And sounding echoes swell the noisy tide.
Straight to our cottage let us bend our way,
My drowsy pow'rs confess sleep's magic sway;
Peaceful [1] and calm upon our couch we'll lie,
While sweet reviving slumbers round our pillows fly.

THE COMPLAINT.—A PASTORAL.

NEAR the heart of a fair spreading grove,
Whose foliage shaded the green,
A shepherd repining at love,
In anguish was heard to complain.

O Cupid! thou wanton young boy!
Since, with thy invisible dart,
Thou hast robb'd a fond youth of his joy,
In return grant the wish of his heart.

Send a shaft so severe from thy bow
(His pining, his sighs to remove),
That Stella, once wounded, may know
How keen are the arrows of love.

No swain once so happy as I,
Nor tun'd with more pleasure the reed;
My breast never vented a sigh,
Till Stella approach'd the gay mead.

1 *Var.* easy.

With mirth, with contentment endow'd,
My hours they flew wantonly by;
I sought no repose in the wood,
Nor from my few sheep would I fly.

Now my reed I have carelessly broke,
Its melody pleases no more;
I pay no regard to a flock
That seldom hath wander'd before.

O Stella! whose beauty so fair
Excels the bright splendour of day,
Ah! have you no pity to share
With Damon thus fall'n to decay?

For you have I quitted the plain,
Forsaken my sheep and my fold;
For you in dull languor and pain,
My tedious moments are told.

For you have my roses grown pale,
They have faded untimely away;
And will not such beauty bewail
A shepherd thus fall'n to decay!

Since your eyes still requite me with scorn,
And kill with their merciless ray,
Like a star of the dawning of morn,
I fall to their lustre a prey.

Some swain who shall mournfully go
To whisper love's sigh to the shade,
Will haply some charity show,
And under the turf see me laid.

Would my love but in pity appear
On the spot where he moulds my cold grave,
And bedew the green sod with a tear,
'Tis all the remembrance I crave.

To the sward then his visage he turn'd;
'Twas wan as the lilies in May;
Fair Stella may see him inurn'd,
He hath sigh'd all his sorrows away.

THE TOWN AND COUNTRY CONTRASTED.

IN AN EPISTLE TO A FRIEND.

From noisy bustle, from contention free,
Far from the busy town I careless loll,
Not like swain Tityrus, or the bards of old,
Under a beechen, venerable shade;
But on a furzy heath, where blooming broom
And thorny whins the spacious plains adorn:
Here health sits smiling on my youthful brow;
For ere the sun beams forth his earliest ray,
And all the east with yellow radiance crowns;
Ere dame Aurora, from her purple bed,
'Gins with her kindling blush to paint the sky,
The soaring lark, morn's cheerful harbinger,
And linnet joyful flutt'ring from the bush,
Stretch their small throats in vocal melody,
To hail the dawn, and drowsy sleep exhale
From man, frail man! on downy softness stretch'd.
Such pleasing scenes Edina cannot boast;
For there the slothful slumber seal'd mine eyes,
Till nine successive strokes the clock had knell'd,

There not the lark, but fishwives' noisy screams,
And inundations plunged from ten house height,
With smell more fragrant than the spicy groves
Of Indus, fraught with all her orient stores,
Roused me from sleep; not sweet refreshing sleep,
But sleep infested with the burning sting
Of bug infernal, who the livelong night
With direst suction sipp'd my liquid gore.
There gloomy vapours in our zenith reign'd,
And fill'd with irksome pestilence the air.
There ling'ring sickness held his feeble court,
Rejoicing in the havock he had made;
And Death, grim Death! with all his ghastly train,
Watch'd the broke slumbers of Edina's sons.
Hail, rosy health! thou pleasing antidote
'Gainst troubling cares! all hail, these rural fields,
Those winding rivulets, and verdant shades,
Where thou, the heav'n-born goddess, deign'st to dwell!
With thee the hind, upon his simple fare,
Lives cheerful, and from heaven no more demands.
But ah! how vast, how terrible the change
With him who night by night in sickness pines!
Him nor his splendid equipage can please,
Nor all the pageantry the world can boast;
Nay, not the consolation of his friends
Can aught avail: his hours are anguish all,
Nor cease till envious death hath closed the scene.
But, Carlos, if we court this maid celestial,
Whether we through meand'ring rivers stray,
Or midst the city's jarring noise remain,
Let temperance, health's blythe concomitant,
To our desires and appetites set bounds,
Else, cloy'd at last, we surfeit every joy;
Our slacken'd nerves reject their wonted spring;

We reap the fruits of our unkindly lusts,
And feebly totter to the silent grave.

ODE TO PITY.

To what sequester'd gloomy shade
Hath ever gentle Pity stray'd?
What brook is water'd from her eyes?
What gales convey her tender sighs?
Unworthy of her grateful lay,
She hath despised the great, the gay;
Nay, all the feelings she imparts
Are far estranged from human hearts.
Ah Pity! whither wouldst thou fly
From human heart, from human eye?
Are desert woods and twilight groves
The scenes the sobbing pilgrim loves?
If there thou dwell'st, O Pity, say
In what lone path you pensive stray.
I'll know thee by the lily's hue,
Besprinkled with the morning's dew;
For thou wilt never blush to wear
The pallid look and falling tear.
In broken cadence from thy tongue,
Oft have we heard the mournful song;
Oft have we view'd the loaded bier
Bedew'd with Pity's softest tear.
Her sighs and tears were ne'er denied
When innocence and virtue died.
But in this black and iron age,
Where Vice and all his demons rage,
Though bells in solemn peals are rung,
Though dirge in mournful verse is sung;

Soon will the vain parade be o'er,
Their name, their memory no more:
Who love and innocence despised,
And every virtue sacrificed.
Here Pity, as a statue dumb,
Will pay no tribute to the tomb;
Or wake the memory of those
Who never felt for others' woes.
Thou mistress of the feeling heart!
Thy powers of sympathy impart.
If mortals would but fondly prize
Thy falling tears, thy passing sighs,
Then should wan poverty no more
Walk feebly from the rich man's door;
Humility should vanquish pride,
And vice be drove from virtue's side:
Then happiness at length should reign,
And golden age begin again.

SONG.

[This 'Song' appeared in Johnson's 'Scots Musical Museum' [178, Vol. II. p. 186], adapted to the tune of the "Highland Lamentation," which was composed by James Oswald, and published in the third volume of his Caledonian Pocket Companion, p. 24.]

Amidst a rosy bank of flowers,
Young Damon mourn'd his forlorn fate;
In sighs he spent his languid hours.
And breath'd his woes in lonely state.

Gay joy no more shall cheer his mind,
No wanton sports can soothe his care,

Since sweet Amanda proved unkind,
And left him full of black[1] despair.

His looks that were as fresh as morn
Can now no longer smiles impart;
His pensive soul, on sadness borne,
Is rack'd and torn by Cupid's dart.

Turn, fair Amanda! cheer your swain,
Unshroud him from his veil of woe;
Range every charm to ease the pain
That in his tortured breast doth grow.

ON THE COLD MONTH OF APRIL, 1771.[2]

Oh! who can hold a fire in his hand
By thinking on the frosty Caucasus!
Or cloy the hungry edge of appetite
By bare imagination of a feast;
Or wallow naked in December's snow,
By bare remembrance of the summer's heat.
SHAKSPEARE.[3]

POETS in vain have hail'd the op'ning spring,
In tender accents woo'd the blooming maid;
In vain have taught the April birds to wing
Their flight through fields in verdant hue array'd.

The Muse, in every season taught to sing,
Amidst the desert snows, by fancy's powers,
Can elevated soar on placid wing
To fields where spring its kindest influence showers.

1 *Var.* bleak.
2 The original title was "April 1771, *as it was*, not as it was *wont* to be."
3 Richard II. Act I. Sc. 3.

April, once famous for the zephyr mild,
For sweets that early in the garden glow,
Say, how converted! to this cheerless wild,
Rushing with torrents of dissolving snow.

Nursed by the moisture of a gentle shower,
Thy foliage oft hath sounded to the breeze;
Oft did thy choristers melodious pour
Their melting numbers through the shady trees.

Fair have I seen thy morn in smiles array'd,
With crimson blush bepaint the eastern sky;
But now the dawn creeps mournful o'er the glade,
Shrouded in colours of a sable dye. [†]

So have I seen the fair with sprightly [1] eye,
And visage cheerful as the laughing morn,
Alternate changing, for the heaving sigh,
Or frowning aspect of contemptuous scorn.

Life, what art thou? a variegated scene
Of mingled light and shade, of joy and woe;
A sea where calms and storms promiscuous reign,
A stream where sweet and bitter jointly flow. [†]

Mute are the plains, the shepherds pipe no more,
The reed's forsaken, and the tender flock,
While echo, list'ning to the tempest's roar,
In silence wanders o'er the beetling rock.

† The Stanzas marked thus [†] appear in the celebrated 'Minstrel' of R. A. Smith. Vol. II. p. 33. They are given to the Air "Lass what art thou." Stanza 7th precedes the 5th.

1 *Var.* laughing.

Winter, too potent for the solar ray,
Bestrides the blast; ascends his icy throne,
And views Britannia, subject to his sway,
Floating emergent on the frigid zone.

Thou savage tyrant of the fretful sky;
Wilt thou for ever in our zenith reign?
To Greenland's seas, congeal'd in chilness fly,
Where howling monsters tread the bleak domain.

Relent, O Boreas! leave thy frozen cell,
Resign to spring her portion of the year;
Let west winds temp'rate wave the flowing gale,
And hills, and vales, and woods a vernal [1] aspect wear.

A SATURDAY'S EXPEDITION;

IN MOCK HEROICS.

Non mira, sed vera, canam.

At that sweet period of revolving time,
When Phœbus lingers not in Thetis' lap,
When twinkling stars their feeble influence shed,
And scarcely glimmer through th' ethereal vault,
Till Sol again his near approach proclaims,
With ray purpureal, and the blushing form
Of fair Aurora, goddess of the dawn,
Leading the winged coursers to the pole
Of Phœbus' car.—'Twas in that season fair,
When jocund summer did the meads array
In Flora's ripening bloom—that we prepar'd

1 *Var.* lively.

To break the bond of business, and to roam
Far from Edina's jarring noise a while.
Fair smiled the wakening morn on our design,
And we with joy elate our march began
For Leith's fair port, where oft Edina's sons
The week conclude, and in carousal quaff
Port, punch, rum, brandy, and Geneva strong,
Liquors too nervous for our feeble purse.
With all convenient speed we there arrived:
Nor had we time to touch at house or hall,
Till from the boat a hollow thundering voice
Bellowed vociferous, and our ears assailed
With "Ho! Kinghorn, oho! come straight aboard."
We fail'd not to obey the stern command,
Utter'd with voice as dreadful as the roar
Of Polyphemus, 'midst rebounding rocks,
When overcome by sage Ulysses' wiles.
"Hoist up the sails," the angry skipper cries,
While fore and aft the busy sailors run,
And loose th' entangled cordage. O'er the deep
Zephyrus blows, and hugs our lofty sails,
Which, in obedience to the powerful breeze,
Swell o'er the foaming main, and kiss the wave.
Now o'er the convex surface of the flood
Precipitate we fly—our foaming prow
Divides the saline stream—on either side
Ridges of yesty surge dilate apace;
But from the poop the waters gently flow,
And undulation for the time decays,
In eddies smoothly floating o'er the main.
Here let the muse in doleful numbers sing
The woful fate of those whose cruel stars
Have doom'd them subject to the languid powers
Of watery sickness. Though with stomach full

Of juicy beef, of mutton in its prime,
Or all the dainties luxury can boast,
They brave the elements,—yet the rocking bark,
Truly regardless of their precious food,
Converts their visage to the ghastly pale,
And makes the sea partaker of the sweets
On which they sumptuous fared. And this the cause
Why those of Scotia's sons whose wealthy store
Hath bless'd them with a splendid coach and six
Rather incline to linger on the way,
And cross the river Forth by Stirling-bridge,
Than be subjected to the ocean's swell,
To dangerous ferries, and to sickness dire.
And now at equal distance shows the land:
Gladly the tars the joyful task pursue
Of gathering in the freight. Debates arise
From counterfeited halfpence. In the hold
The seamen scrutinize, and eager peep
Through every corner where their watchful eye
Suspects a lurking-place, or dark retreat,
To hide the timid corpse of some poor soul,
Whose scanty purse can scarce one groat afford.
At length we cheerful land on Fifan shore,
Where sickness vanishes, and all the ills
Attendant on the passage of Kinghorn.
Our pallid cheeks resume their rosy hue,
And empty stomachs keenly crave supply.
With eager step we reach'd the friendly inn,
Nor did we think of beating our retreat
Till every gnawing appetite was quell'd.
Eastward along the Fifan coast we stray;
And here th' unwearied eye may fondly gaze
O'er all the tufted groves and pointed spires
With which the pleasant banks of Forth are crown'd.

Sweet navigable stream! where commerce reigns,
Where peace and jocund plenty smile serene:
On thy green banks sits Liberty enthroned,
But not that shadow which the English youth
So eagerly pursue; but freedom bought
When Caledonia's triumphant sword
Taught the proud sons of Anglia to bemoan
Their fate at Bannockburn, where thousands came
Never to tread their native soil again.

Far in a hollow den, where nature's hand
Had careless strew'd the rocks—a dreadful cave,
Whose concave ceiling echoed to the floods
Their hollow murmurs on the trembling shore,
Demanded our approach. The yawning porch
Its massy sides disclosed, and o'er the top
The ivy tendrils twined th' uncultured fern:
Fearful we pry into the dreary vault,
Hoary with age, and breathing noxious damp:
Here busy owls may unmolested dwell
In solitary gloom; for few there are
Whose inclination leads them to review
A cell where putrid smells infectious reign. [1]

Then turning westward, we our course pursue
Along the verge of Fortha's briny flood,
Till we o'ertake the gradual rising dale
Where fair Burntisland rears her reverend dome;
And here the vulgar sign-post, painted o'er
With imitations vile of man and horse,
Of small beer frothing o'er th' unshapely jug,
With courteous invitation, spoke us fair
To enter in, and taste what precious drops

1 A large cave at a small distance from Kinghorn, supposed, about a century ago, to have been the receptacle of thieves.—*F*

Were there reserved to moisten strangers' throats,
Too often parch'd upon the tedious way.
After regaling here with sober cann,
Our limbs we plied, and nimbly measured o'er
The hills, the vales, and the extensive plains,
Which form the distance from Burntisland's port
To Inverkeithing. Westward still we went,
Till in the ferry-boat we loll'd at ease;
Nor did we long on Neptune's empire float,
For scarce ten posting minutes were elapsed
Till we again on *terra firma* stood,
And to M'Laren's[1] march'd, where roasted lamb,
With cooling lettuce, crown'd our social board.
Here too the cheering glass, chief foe to cares!
Went briskly round; and many a virgin fair
Received our homage in a bumper full.
Thus having sacrificed a jocund hour
To smiling mirth, we quit the happy scene,
And move progressive to Edina's walls.
Now still returning eve creep'd gradual on,
And the bright sun, as weary of the sky,
Beam'd forth a languid occidental ray,
Whose ruby tinctured radiance faintly gleam'd
Upon the airy cliffs and distant spires,
That float on the horizon's utmost verge.
So we, with fessive joints and lingering pace,
Moved slowly on, and did not reach the town
Till Phœbus had unyoked his prancing steeds.
Ye sons of Caledonia! who delight,
With all the pomp and pageantry of state,
To roll along in gilded affluence,
For one poor moment wean your thought from these,

1 An innkeeper somewhat notable in his "day and generation."

And list this humble strain. If you, like us,
Could brave the angry waters; be uprous'd
By the first salutation to the morn
Paid by the watchful cock; or be compell'd
On foot to wander o'er the lonely plain
For twenty tedious miles; then should the Gout
With all his racking pangs forsake your frame:
For he delights not to traverse the field,
Or rugged steep, but prides him to recline
On the luxuriance of a velvet fold,
Where indolence on purple sofa lolls.

THE DECAY OF FRIENDSHIP.

A PASTORAL ELEGY.

When gold, man's sacred deity, did smile,
My friends were plenty, and my sorrows few;
Mirth, love, and bumpers did my hours beguile,
And arrowed Cupids round my slumbers flew.

What shepherd then could boast more happy days?
My lot was envied by each humbler swain;
Each bard in smooth eulogium sung my praise,
And Damon listened to the guileful strain.

Flattery! alluring as the Syren's lay,
And as deceitful thy enchanting tongue,
How have you taught my wavering mind to stray,
Charm'd and attracted by the baneful song!

My pleasant cottage, shelter'd from the gale,
Arose with moss, and rural ivy bound;

And scarce a flow'ret in my lowly vale,
But was with bees of various colours crown'd.

Free o'er my lands the neighbouring flocks could roam;
How welcome were the swains and flocks to me!
The shepherds kindly were invited home,
To chase the hours in merriment and glee.

To wake emotions in the youthful mind,
Strephon with voice melodious tuned the song;
Each sylvan youth the sounding chorus join'd,
Fraught with contentment midst the festive throng.

My clust'ring grape compensed their magic skill,
The bowl capacious swell'd in purple tide;
To shepherds liberal as the crystal rill,
Spontaneous gurgling from the mountain's side.

[The shady arbour, and refreshing breeze,
In circling eddies, crown'd their noon-day toil;
The sweets of rural elegance and ease,
Survey'd their pleasures with applauding smile.[1]]

But ah! these youthful sportive hours are fled;
These scenes of jocund mirth are now no more;
No healing slumbers tend my humble bed,
No friends condole the sorrows of the poor.

And what avail the thoughts of former joy!
What comfort bring they in the adverse hour!
Can they the canker-worm of care destroy,
Or brighten fortune's discontented lour?

1 I restore this stanza from the original.

He who hath long traversed the fertile plain,
Where nature in its fairest vesture smiled,
Will he not cheerless view the fairy scene,
When lonely wand'ring o'er the barren wild?

[When, from the summit of a towering hill,
My seats of former happiness I spy,
The tears of sorrow o'er my cheeks distil,
While mournful thoughts the gushing streams supply.[1]]

For now pale poverty, with haggard eye
And rueful aspect, darts her gloomy ray;
My wonted guests their proffer'd aid deny,
And from the paths of Damon steal away.

Thus, when fair summer's lustre gilds the lawn,
When ripening blossoms deck the spreading tree,
The birds with melody salute the dawn,
And o'er the daisy hangs the humming bee.

But when the beauties of the circling year
In chilling frosts and furious storms decay;
No more the bees upon the plains appear,
No more the warblers hail the infant day.

To the lone corner of some distant shore,
In dreary devious pilgrimage I'll fly,
And wander pensive where deceit no more
Shall trace my footsteps with a mortal eye.

There solitary saunter o'er the beach,
And to the murm'ring surge my griefs disclose;

1 I restore this stanza from the original.

There shall my voice in plaintive wailings teach
The hollow caverns to resound my woes.

Sweet are the waters to the parched tongue;
Sweet are the blossoms to the wanton bee;
Sweet to the shepherd sound the lark's shrill song;
But sweeter far is solitude to me.

Adieu, ye fields! where I have fondly strayed,
Ye swains who once the fav'rite Damon knew;
Farewell, ye sharers of my bounty's aid!
Ye sons of base Ingratitude, adieu!

WRITTEN AT THE HERMITAGE OF BRAID,

NEAR EDINBURGH.

[It was among the Braid hills that Burns was wont to walk with Professor Stewart: and it was the scenery which excited the muse of Fergusson that made him beautifully say to the Professor, "that the sight of so many smoking cottages gave a pleasure to his mind, which none could understand who had not witnessed, like himself, the happiness and worth which they contained." The 'Hermitage' stands in the secluded low ground near the Braid Burn. An engraving of it was published by Storer and Greig.]

Would you relish a rural retreat,
Or the pleasure the groves can inspire?
The city's allurements forget,
To this spot of enchantment retire.

Where a valley and crystalline brook,
Whose current glides sweetly along,
Give nature a fanciful look
The beautiful woodlands among.

Behold the umbrageous trees
A covert of verdure have spread,
Where shepherds may loll at their ease,
And pipe to the musical shade:

For lo! through each op'ning is heard
In concert with waters below,[1]
The voice[2] of a musical bird,
Whose numbers do gracefully flow.[3]

The bushes and arbours so green,
With tendrils of spray interwove,
With foliage shelter the scene,
And form a retirement for love.

Here Venus transported may rove
From pleasure to pleasure unseen,
Nor wish for the Cyprian grove
Her youthful Adonis to screen.

Oft let me contemplative dwell
On a scene where such beauties appear;
I could live in a cot or a cell,
And never think solitude near.

1 *Var.* The strain of wild melody flow.
2 *Var.* from the throat. 3 *Var.* In concert with waters below.

SONG.

[From Johnson's Scots Musical Museum (125, p. 131. Vol. II. Note, p. 121.) where it is given as additional words to the tune of "Braw, braw lads of Galla-water."]

No repose can I discover
Nor find joy without my lover;
Can I stay when she's not near me?
Cruel fates! once deign to hear me.

The charms of grandeur don't decoy me,
Fair Eliza must enjoy me:[1]
My crown and sceptre I resign,
The shepherd's life shall still be mine.

A BURLESQUE ELEGY

ON THE AMPUTATION OF A STUDENT'S HAIR, ANTECEDENT TO HIS ENTERING INTO ORDERS.[2]

O SAD catastrophe! O event dire![3]
How shall the loss, the heavy loss be borne?
Or how the muse attune the plaintive lyre,
To sing of Strephon with his ringlets shorn?

Say ye who can divine the mighty cause,
From whence this modern circumcision springs?

1 Give me joy.
2 This 'title' restored from the original.
3 Improved by Mr. Robert Chambers thus:—
O sad catastrophe! event most dire!
Ed. of Fergusson, 1840, p. 39.

Why such oppressive and such rigid laws
Are still attendant on religious things?

Alas! poor Strephon, to the stern decree
Which prunes your tresses, are you doom'd to yield?
Soon shall your *Caput*, like the blasted tree,
Diffuse its faded honours o'er the field.

Now let the solemn sounds of mourning swell,
And wake sad echoes to prolong the lay;
For hark! methinks I hear the tragic knell;
This hour bespeaks the barber on his way.

O razor! yet thy poignant edge suspend;
O yet indulge me with a short delay,
Till I once more pourtray my youthful friend,
Ere his proud locks are scatter'd on the clay.

Ere the huge wig, in formal curls array'd,
With pulvile pregnant, shall o'ershade his face;
Or, like the wide umbrella, lend its aid,
To banish lustre from the sacred place.

Mourn, O ye zephyrs! for, alas! no more
His waving ringlets shall your call obey;
For ah! the stubborn wig must now be wore,
Since Strephon's locks are scatter'd on the clay.

Amanda, too, in bitter anguish sighs,
And grieves the metamorphosis to see:
Mourn not, Amanda, for the hair that lies
Dead on the ground shall be revived for thee.

Some skilful artist of a French *frizeur*,
With graceful ringlets shall thy temples bind,
And cull the precious relics from the floor,
Which yet may flutter in the wanton wind.

FASHION.—A POEM.

Bred up where discipline most rare is,
In Military Garden Paris.
HUDIBRAS.

O NATURE, parent goddess! at thy shrine,
Prone to the earth, the muse, in humble song,
Thy aid implores: Nor will she wing her flight
Till thou, bright form, in thy effulgence pure
Deign'st to look down upon her lowly state,
And shed thy powerful influence benign.
Come then, regardless of vain fashion's fools,
Of all those vile enormities of shape
That crowd the world, and with thee bring
Wisdom in sober contemplation clad,
To lash those bold usurpers from the stage.
On that bless'd spot where the Parisian dome
To fools the stealing hand of time displays,
Fashion her empire holds; a goddess great!
View her amidst the *millinerian* train
On a resplendent throne exalted high,
Strangely diversified with gew-gaw forms.
Her busy hand glides pleasurably o'er
The darling novelties, the trinkets rare
That greet the sight of the admiring dames,
Whose dear bought treasures o'er their native isle
Contagious spread, infect the wholesome air
That cherish'd vigour in Britannia's sons.

Near this proud seat of fashion's antic form
A sphere revolves, on whose bright orb behold
The circulating mode of changeful dress,
Which, like the image of the sun himself,
Glories in coursing through the diverse signs
Which blazon in the zodiac of heaven.
Around her throne coquets and petits beaux
Unnumber'd shine, and with each other vie
In nameless ornaments and gaudy plumes.
O worthy emulation, to excel
In trifles such as these: how truly great!
Unworthy of the peevish blubbering boy,
Crush'd in his childhood by the fondling nurse,
Who for some fav'rite bauble frets and pines.
Amongst the proud attendants of this shrine,
The wealthy, young and gay Clarinda draws,
From poorer objects, the astonish'd eye:
Her looks, her dress, and her affected mien
Doom her enthusiast keen in fashion's train:
White as the cover'd Alps or wintry face
Of snowy Lapland, her toupee uprear'd,
Exhibits to the view a cumbrous mass
Of curls high nodding o'er her polish'd brow;
From which redundant flows the Brussels lace,
With pendant ribbons too of various dye,
Where all the colours in th' ethereal bow,
Unite, and blend, and tantalize the sight.
Nature, to thee alone, not fashion's pomp,
Does beauty owe her all-commanding eye.
From the green bosom of the watery main,
Array'd by thee, majestic Venus rose,
With waving ringlets carelessly diffused,
Floating luxurious o'er the restless surge.
What Rubens then, with his enliv'ning hand,

Could paint the bright vermilion of her cheek,
Pure as the roseate portal of the east,
That opens to receive the cheering ray
Of Phœbus beaming from the orient sky?
For sterling beauty needs no faint essays,
Or colourings of art, to gild her more:
She is all perfect. And, if beauty fail,
Where are those ornaments, those rich attires
Which can reflect a lustre on that face,
Where she with light innate disdains to shine?
Britons, beware of fashion's luring wiles.
On either hand, chief guardians of her power,
And sole dictators of her fickle voice,
Folly and dull effeminacy reign;
Whose blackest magic and unhallow'd spells,
The Roman ardour check'd; their strength decay'd,
And all their glory scatter'd on the winds.
Tremble, O Albion! for the voice of fate
Seems ready to decree thy after-fall.
By pride, by luxury, what fatal ills
Unheeded have approach'd thy mortal frame;
How many foreign weeds their heads have rear'd
In thy fair garden! Hasten, ere their strength
And baneful vegetation taint the soil,
To root out rank disease, which soon must spread,
If no bless'd antidote will purge away
Fashion's proud minions from our sea-girt isle.

RETIREMENT.

Odi profanum vulgus et arceo.
HOR.

COME, Inspiration, from thy vernal bower,
To thy celestial voice attune the lyre,
Smooth gliding strains with sweet profusion pour,
And aid my numbers with seraphic fire.

Under a lonely spreading oak I lay,
My head upon the daisied green reclined,
The evening sun beam'd forth his parting ray,
The foliage bended to the hollow wind.

There gentle sleep my acting powers suppress'd,
The city's distant hum was heard no more,
Yet Fancy suffer'd not the mind to rest,
Ever obedient to her wakeful power.

She led me near a crystal fountain's noise,
Where undulating waters sportive play,
Where a young comely swain, with pleasing [1] voice,
In tender [2] accents sung his sylvan lay.

"Adieu, ye baneful pleasures of the town;
'Farewell, ye giddy and unthinking throng;
'Without regret your foibles I disown,
'Themes more exalted claim the Muse's song.

'Your stony hearts no social feelings share,
'Your souls of distant sorrows ne'er partake;
'Ne'er do you listen to the needy prayer,
'Nor drop a tear for tender pity's sake.

1 *Var.* tender. 2 *Var.* pleasing.

'Welcome, ye fields, ye fountains, and ye groves,
'Ye flowery meadows, and extensive plains,
'Where soaring warblers pour their pleasing loves,
'Each landscape cheering with their vocal strains.

'Here rural beauty, op'ning to the eye, [1]
'On the green margin [2] of each streamlet glows,
'Where with the blooming hawthorn, roses vie, [3]
'And the fair lily of the valley grows.

'Here Chastity may wander unassail'd,
'Through fields where gay seducers cease to rove;
'Where open Vice o'er Virtue ne'er prevail'd,
'Where all is innocence, and all is love.

'Peace, with her olive wand, triumphant reigns,
'Guarding secure the peasant's humble bed;
'Envy is banish'd from the happy plains,
'And Defamation's busy tongue is laid.

'Health and contentment usher in the morn,
'With jocund smiles they court [4] the rural swain,
'For which the peer, to pompous titles born,
'Forsaken sighs—but all his sighs are vain.

'For the calm comforts of an easy mind,
'In yonder lowly cot delight to dwell,
'And leave the statesman for the lab'ring hind,
'The regal palace for the humble cell. [5]

1 *Var.* rears her pleasing shrine. 2 *Var.* She on the margin.
3 *Var.* roses twine. 4 *Var.* cheer.
5 Certes, in fair virtue's heavenly road,
The cottage leaves the palace far behind.
BURNS' *Cotter's Saturday Night,' Stanza* xix.

'Ye who to wisdom would devote your hours,
'And far from bustle,[1] far from mischief[2] stray,
'Look back disdainful on the city's towers,
'Where Pride, where Folly point the slippery way.

'Pure flows the limpid river's[3] crystal tide,
'Through rocks, through dens, and ever verdant vales,
'Till to the town's unhallow'd wall it glides,
'Where all its purity and lustre fails.

EXTEMPORE,

ON SEEING SOME STANZAS TO MRS. HARTLEY, WHEREIN SHE IS DESCRIBED AS RESEMBLING MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

[The "flattering stanzas," which were the occasion of the present Extempore, appeared in the 'Edinburgh Evening Courant' (Wednesday), April 1st (All fool's day!), 1772 They are as follows:—

TO MRS. HARTLEY,

On hearing she intends appearing in the character of Mary Queen of Scots.

Cease, Hartley, cease: Forbear the ungracious part;
In calm repose let Mary's sorrows lie,
We've oft confess'd your empire o'er the heart,
By the warm plaudit, and the broken sigh,
But should you now, in gentle Mary's guise,
Claim the soft tribute of the feeling soul,
I fear the tender passions soon would rise
Too high for sage discretion to control:
So fair a picture[4] of the Queen we love
In every youthful charm, can never fail to move.

1 *Var.* riot. 2 *Var.* discord. 3 *Var.* stream.
4 It is remarkable, that there is a very striking likeness between Mrs. H. and the original paintings of Queen Mary.

Mrs. Hartley was only a second-rate actress. Her 'first attempts' were very favourably received; but latterly she proved a mere copyist—her only well supported character, 'Jane Shore,' being after Mrs. Yates. 'Detector,' in the 'Weekly Magazine,' says, "The tree at first bore many blossoms: I am sorry it did not yield more fruit. Although it failed, it was not for want of care and culture (on the part of Digges, the Manager of the Theatre) or the sunshine of public favour." There is a very beautiful Portrait of Mrs. Hartley drawn and engraved by Sherwin.]

Hartley resembles Scotland's Queen,
Some bard enraptured cries:
A flattering bard he is, I ween,
Or else the painter lies.[1]

ON THE DEATH OF MR. THOMAS LANCASHIRE,

COMEDIAN.

[Lancashire, says Jackson, "possessed a great fund of dry humour, and filled Shuter's line in low comedy. He was a great favourite with the public. He kept a tavern, first in the Canongate, and afterwards in the New Town. He drank and joked with his customers: laughed and grew fat; and at length died, respected by many, and with the good word of all."—*History of the Scottish Stage*, p. 42.]

Alas, poor Thom! how oft, with merry heart,
Have we beheld thee play the sexton's part,[2]
Each comic heart must now be grieved to see
The sexton's dreary part perform'd on thee.

1 See her picture in the palace of Holyroodhouse.—*F.*
2 Grave-digger in Hamlet.—*F.*

SONG.[1]

WHERE winding Forth adorns the vale,
Fond Strephon, once a shepherd gay,
Did to the rocks his lot bewail,
And thus address'd his plaintive lay:
"O Julia! more than lily fair,
"More blooming than the kindling rose,
"How can thy breast relentless wear
"A heart more cold than winter's snows?

"Yet nipping winter's keenest sway
"But for a short-liv'd space prevails;
"Spring-time returns, and cheers each spray,
"Scented with Flora's fragrant gales.
"Come, Julia, come, thy love obey,
"Thou mistress of angelic charms!
"Come smiling like the morn in May,
"And centre in thy Strephon's arms.

"Else, haunted by the fiend despair,
"He'll court some solitary grove,
"Where mortal foot did ne'er repair,
"But swains oppress'd by hapless love.
"From the once pleasing rural throng,
"Remov'd, he'll through the desert stray,
"Where Philomela's mournful song
"Shall join his melancholy lay."

1 This 'Song' appeared in Johnson's 'Scots Musical Museum' [142, Vol. 2d. p. 149.] adapted to the fine old air of 'Cumbernauld House,' which is inserted both in Macgibbon and Oswald's Collections. Can no one recover the old words to 'Cumbernauld House?' The Editor of Fergusson should feel greatly obliged by any one sending them or any fragment to his publishers. They have eluded the search even of Mr. Laing and of Mr. Sharpe.

CONSCIENCE:—AN ELEGY.

> ————Leave her to heaven,
> And to the thorns that in her bosom lodge,
> To prick and sting her.
> SHAKSPEARE. [RICHARD II. ACT I. SC. 5.]

No choiring warblers flutter in the sky;
  Phœbus no longer holds his radiant sway;
While Nature, with a melancholy eye,
  Bemoans the loss of his departed ray.

O happy he whose conscience knows no guile!
  He to the sable night can bid farewell;
From cheerless objects close his eyes a while
  Within the silken folds of sleep to dwell.

Elysian dreams shall hover round his bed,
  His soul shall wing, on pleasing fancies borne,
To shining vales where flow'rets lift their head,
  Waked by the breathing zephyrs of the morn.

But wretched he whose foul reproachful deeds
  Can through an angry conscience wound his rest,
His eye too oft the balmy comfort needs,
  Though slumber seldom knows him as her guest.

To calm the raging tumults of his soul,
  If wearied nature should an hour demand,
Around his bed the sheeted spectres howl,
  Red with revenge the grinning furies stand.

Nor state nor grandeur can his pain allay;
  Where shall he find a requiem to his woes?
Power cannot chase the frightful gloom away,
  Nor music lull him to a kind repose.

Where is the king that conscience fears to chide?
Conscience, that candid judge of right and wrong,
Will o'er the secrets of each heart preside,
Nor awed by pomp nor tamed by soothing song.

ON THE DEATH OF DR. TOSHACK OF PERTH,

A GREAT HUMOURIST.

Where be those gibes, those flashes of merriment, that were wont to set the table in a roar?

HAMLET, ACT V.

THE Doctor dead! let old St. Johnston mourn;
Let laughter's sons to sorrow's vot'ries turn;
Mirth, wit, and humour from the earth are gone,
And to the summit of Olympus flown.
Could Momus die, 'tis sure, as Jove's in heaven,
The vacant chair to Toshack would be given.

THE SIMILE.

[This Simile appears as a Song (cxxxvi. p. 118—19) in the Goldfinch or new modern Songster, 1 Vol. 12mo, 1782. Burns's first effusion, namely, the words to the 'Tither Morn,' appeared in the Goldfinch; and I believe that this is the Collection which he speaks of in his Memoranda.]

AT noontide as Colin and Sylvia lay
Within a cool jessamine bower,
A butterfly, waked by the heat of the day,
Was sipping the juice of each flower.

Near the shade of this covert a young shepherd boy
The gaudy brisk flutterer spies,
Who held it as pastime to seek and destroy
Each beautiful insect that flies.

From the lily he hunted this fly to the rose,
From the rose to the lily again,
Till weary with tracing its motions, he chose
To leave the pursuit with disdain.

Then Colin to Sylvia smilingly said,
Amyntor has follow'd you long;
From him, like the butterfly, still have you fled,
Though woo'd by his musical tongue.

Beware in persisting to start from his arms,
But with his fond wishes comply;
Come, take my advice; or he's pall'd with your charms,
Like the youth and the beautiful fly.

Says Sylvia,—Colin, thy simile's just,
But still to Amyntor I'm coy;
For I vow she's a simpleton blind that would trust
A swain, when he courts to destroy.

TO MR. [JOHN F.] GUION, COMEDIAN,

FOR HIS PANEGYRIC ON DR. WEBSTER.

Though moralists may wisely say,
It is but barely civil
For all our enemies to pray,
And render good for evil;

I think it strange that Guion sage,
Should grow that very culprit,
To worship those who hate the stage,
And lash it from the pulpit.[1]

DAMON TO HIS FRIENDS.

A BALLAD.

The billows of life are suppress't,
Its tumults, its toils disappear,
To relinquish the storms that are past,
I think on the sunshine that's near.

Dame Fortune and I are agreed;
Her frowns I no longer endure;
For the goddess has kindly decreed,
That Damon no more shall be poor.

Now riches will ope the dim eyes,
To view the increase of my store;
And many my friendship will prize
Who never knew Damon before.

But those I renounce and abjure,
Who carried contempt in their eye:
May poverty still be their dower
That could look on misfortune awry!

1 The above Epigram was written on reading several very encomiastic Verses on Dr. Webster, which appeared in the Scots Magazine for July 1772, &c. Guion was equally an admirer of Fergusson.

Ye powers that weak mortals govern,
Keep pride at his bay from my mind;
O let me not haughtily learn
To despise the few friends that were kind!

For theirs was a feeling sincere;
'Twas free from delusion and art;
O may I that friendship revere,
And hold it yet dear to my heart!

By which was I ever forgot?
It was both my physician and cure,
That still found the way to my cot,
Although I was wretched and poor.

'Twas balm to my canker-tooth'd care,
The wound of affliction it heal'd;
In distress it was Pity's soft tear,
When naked, cold Poverty's shield.

Attend, ye kind youth of the plain!
Who oft with my sorrows condoled;
You cannot be deaf to the strain,
Since Damon is master of gold.

I have chose a soft [1] sylvan retreat,
Bedeck'd with the beauties of spring;
Around my flocks wander [2] and bleat,
While the musical choristers sing.

I force not the waters to stand
In an artful canal at my door,

1 *Var.* sweet. 2 *Var.* nibble.

But a river at Nature's command,
Meanders both limpid and pure.

She's the goddess that darkens my bowers
With tendrils of ivy and vine;
She tutors my shrubs and my flowers,
Her taste is the standard of mine.

What a pleasing diversified group
Of trees has she spread o'er my ground!
She has taught the grave larix to droop,
And the birch to deal odours around.

For whom has she perfumed my groves?
For whom has she cluster'd my vine?
If friendship despise my alcoves,
They'll ne'er be recesses of mine.

He who tastes his grape juices by stealth,
Without chosen companions to share,
Is the basest of slaves to his wealth,
And the pitiful minion of care.

O come! and with Damon retire
Amidst the green umbrage embower'd!
Your mirth and your songs to inspire,
Shall the juice of his vintage be pour'd.

O come, ye dear friends of his youth!
Of all his good fortune partake;
Nor think 'tis departing from truth,
To say 'twas preserved for your sake.

THE CANONGATE PLAY-HOUSE IN RUINS.

A BURLESQUE POEM.

[This 'Theatre' stood behind the south line of the street, opposite to the head of New Street. It was founded in 1746 by Ryan of Covent Garden, London: but was only first used under the royal licence on 9th December, 1767. A new 'Theatre' being built in 1768 in the New Town, the humble 'Canongate' was almost immediately after left to ruin. It was in this 'Theatre' that the 'Gentle Shepherd' of Ramsay was first publicly represented, and where subsequently Home's 'Douglas' was first privately represented with such a Corps Dramatique as is unlikely ever to "tread the Stage again."]

Ye few, whose feeling hearts are ne'er estranged
From soft emotions! ye who often wear
The eye of pity, and oft vent her sighs,
When sad Melpomene, in woe-fraught strains,
Gains entrance to the breast; or often smile
When brisk Thalia gayly trips along
Scenes of enlivening mirth; attend my song.
And Fancy! thou whose ever-flaming light
Can penetrate into the dark abyss
Of chaos, and of hell—O! with thy blazing torch
The wasteful scene illumine, that the Muse,
With daring pinions, may her flight pursue,
Nor with timidity be known to soar
O'er the theatric world, to chaos changed.
  Can I contemplate on those dreary scenes
Of mould'ring desolation, and forbid
The voice elegiac and the falling tear!
No more from box to box the basket piled
With oranges as radiant as the spheres,
Shall with their luscious virtues charm the sense

Of taste and smell. No more the gaudy beau,
With handkerchief in lavender well drench'd,
Or bergamot, or rose-watero pure,
With flavoriferous sweets shall chase away
The pestilential fumes of vulgar cits,
Who, in impatience for the curtain's rise,
Amused the lingering moments, and applied
Thirst-quenching porter to their parched lips.
Alas! how sadly alter'd is the scene!
For lo! those sacred walls, that late were brush'd
By rustling silks and waving capuchins,
Are now become the sport of wrinkled time!
Those walls, that late have echoed to the voice
Of stern King Richard, to the seat transform'd
Of crawling spiders and detested moths,
Who in the lonely crevices reside;
Or gender in the beams, that have upheld
Gods, demi-gods, and all the joyous crew
Of thunderers in the galleries above.
O Shakspeare! where are all thy tinsell'd kings,
Thy fawning courtiers, and thy waggish clowns?
Where all thy fairies, spirits, witches, fiends,
That here have gamboll'd in nocturnal sport,
Round the lone oak, or sunk in fear away
From the shrill summons of the cock at morn?
Where now the temples, palaces, and towers?
Where now the groves that ever-verdant smiled?
Where now the streams that never ceased to flow?
Where now the clouds, the rains, the hails, the winds,
The thunders, lightnings, and the tempests strong?
Here shepherds, lolling in their woven bowers,
In dull recitativo often sung
Their loves accompanied with clangour strong
From horns, from trumpets, clarionets, bassoons;

From violinos sharp, or droning bass,
Or the brisk tinkling of a harpsichord.
Such is thy power, O music! such thy fame,
That it has fabled been, how foreign song,
Soft issuing from Tenducci's [1] slender throat,
Has drawn a plaudit from the gods enthroned
Round the empyreum of Jove himself,
High seated on Olympus' airy top.
Nay, that his feverous voice was known to soothe
The shrill-toned prating of the female tongues,
Who, in obedience to the lifeless song,
All prostrate fell; all fainting died away
In silent ecstacies of passing joy.
Ye who oft wander by the silver light
Of sister Luna, or to church-yard's gloom,
Or cypress shades, if chance should guide your steps
To this sad mansion, think not that you tread
Unconsecrated paths; for on this ground
Have holy streams been pour'd, and flow'rets strew'd;
While many a kingly diadem, I ween,
Lies useless here entomb'd, with heaps of coin
Stamp'd in theatric mint: offenceless gold!
That carried not persuasion in its hue,
To tutor mankind in their evil ways.
After a lengthen'd series of years,
When the unhallow'd spade shall discompose

1 Giusto Ferdinando Tenducci.—This Operatic singer was not certainly the Orpheus which Fergusson represents: at the same time his mellifluous mode of singing Scottish melodies made him an especial favourite. It was for Tenducci that Fergusson first appeared as an author by writing [1769] the Songs in the Opera of Artaxerxes. Alexander Campbell, in his History of Scottish Poetry [Life of Fergusson], has recorded that Tenducci used to speak of our Poet with the tenderest emotion and affection. He it was who attracted George Thomson's attention to the 'Scottish melodies' which issued in their marriage to "immortal verse" in the peerless lyrics of Burns and other of the great Poets of Scotland.

This mass of earth, then relics shall be found,
Which, or for gems of worth, or Roman coins,
Well may obtrude on antiquary's eye.
Ye spouting blades! regard this ruin'd fane,
And nightly come within those naked walls,
To shed the tragic tear. Full many a drop
Of precious inspiration have you suck'd
From its dramatic sources. O! look here
Upon this roofless and forsaken pile,
And stalk in pensive sorrow o'er the ground
Where you've beheld so many noble scenes.
Thus when the mariner to foreign clime
His bark conveys, where odoriferous gales,
And orange-groves, and love-inspiring wine,
Have oft repaid his toil; if earthquake dire,
With hollow groanings and convulsive pangs,
The ground hath rent, and all those beauties soil'd,
Will he refrain to shed the grateful drop,
A tribute justly due (though seldom paid)
To the remembrance of happier times?

THE PEASANT, THE HEN, AND YOUNG DUCKS.

A FABLE.

A Hen of all the dunghill[1] crew
The fairest, stateliest to view,
Of laying tired, she fondly begs
Her keeper's leave to hatch her eggs:
He, dunn'd with the incessant cry,
Was forced for peace' sake to comply;

1 *Var.* midden.

And in a month the downy brood
Came chirping round the hen for food,
Who view'd them with parental eyes
Of pleasing fondness and surprise,
And was not at a loss to trace
Her likeness growing in their face,
Though the broad bills could well declare
That they another offspring were;
So strong will prejudices blind,
And lead astray the easy mind.
To the green margin of the brook
The hen her fancied children took;
Each young one shakes his unfledged wings,
And to the flood by instinct springs;
With willing strokes they gladly swim,
Or dive into the glassy stream,
While the fond mother vents her grief,
And prays the peasant's kind relief.
The peasant heard the bitter cries,
And thus in terms of rage replies,
"You fool! give o'er your useless moan,
"Nor mourn misfortunes not your own;
"But learn in wisdom to forsake
"The offspring of the duck and drake."
To whom the hen, with angry crest
And scornful looks, herself addrest:
"If reason were my constant guide
"(Of man the ornament and pride),
"Then should I boast a cruel heart,
"And foreign feeling all depart;
"But since poor I, by instinct blind,
"Can boast no feelings so refined,
"'Tis hoped your reason will excuse,
"Though I your counsel sage refuse,

"And from the perils of the flood
"Attempt to save another's brood."

MORAL.

When Pity, gen'rous nymph! possest,
And moved at will the human breast,
No tongue its distant sufferings told,
But she assisted, she condoled,
And willing bore her tender part
In all the feelings of the heart;
But now from her our hearts decoy'd,
To sense of others' woes destroy'd,
Act only from a selfish view,
Nor give the aid to pity due.

ON SEEING A LADY PAINT HERSELF.

When, by some misadventure crost,
The banker hath his fortunes lost,
Credit his instant need supplies,
And for a moment blinds our eyes:
So Delia, when her beauty's flown,
Trades on a bottom not her own,
And labours to escape detection
By putting on a false complexion.

AGAINST REPINING AT FORTUNE.

Though in my narrow bounds of rural toil,
No obelisk or splendid column rise;

Though partial Fortune still averts her smile,
And views my labours with condemning eyes;

Yet all the gorgeous vanity of state
I can contemplate with a cool disdain!
Nor shall the honours of the gay and great
E'er wound my bosom with an envious pain.

Avails it aught the grandeur of their halls,
With all the glories of the pencil hung,
If Truth, fair Truth! within th' unhallow'd walls,
Hath never whisper'd with her seraph tongue?

Avails it aught, if music's gentle lay
Hath oft been echoed by the sounding dome;
If music cannot soothe their griefs away,
Or change a wretched to a happy home?

Though Fortune should invest them with her spoils,
And banish poverty with look severe,
Enlarge their confines, and decrease their toils,
Ah! what avails if she increase their care?

Though fickle she disclaim my moss-grown cot,
Nature, thou look'st with more impartial eyes;
Smile thou, fair goddess! on my sober lot;
I'll neither fear her fall, nor court her rise.

When early larks shall cease the matin song;
When Philomel at night resigns her lays;
When melting numbers to the owl belong,
Then shall the reed be silent in thy praise.

Can he who with the tide of Fortune sails,
More pleasure from the sweets of nature share?

Do zephyrs waft him more ambrosial gales,
Or do his groves a gayer livery wear?

To me the heavens unveil as pure a sky;
To me the flowers as rich a bloom disclose;
The morning beams as radiant to my eye,
And darkness guides me to as sweet repose.

If luxury their lavish dainties piles,
And still attends upon their sated hours,
Doth health reward them with her open smiles,
Or exercise enlarge their feeble powers?

'Tis not in richest mines of Indian gold,
That man this jewel happiness can find,
If his unfeeling breast, to virtue cold,
Denies her entrance to his ruthless mind.

Wealth, pomp and honour are but gaudy toys;
Alas! how poor the pleasures they impart!
Virtue's the sacred source of all the joys
That claim a lasting mansion in the heart.

EPITAPH ON GENERAL WOLFE.

[We meet so very rarely with a man at all to be compared with the illustrious hero of Quebec, that it is deemed unnecessary to apologize for the introduction of the following Notices concerning him; the latter of which is peculiarly interesting as the testimony of a foreigner:—The Epitaph of Fergusson scarcely warrants the illustrations, but it is well even to step aside to commend ability and worth.—*Death of Wolfe.* When struck for the third time, he sank down; he then supported himself for a few minutes in a sitting posture, with the assist-

ance of Lieutenant Brown, Mr. Henderson a volunteer, and a private soldier, all of the Grenadier Company of the 22d; Colonel Williamson of the Royal Artillery, afterwards went to his aid. From time to time Wolfe tried with his faint hand to clear away the death-mist that gathered on his sight; but the effort seemed vain; for presently he lay back and gave no signs of life beyond a heavy breathing, and an occasional groan. Meantime the French had given way, and were flying in all directions. The Grenadier officers, seeing this, called out to those around him:—"See, they run." The words caught the ear of the dying man: he raised himself, like one aroused from sleep, and asked eagerly, "Who runs?" "The enemy, sir," answered the officer; "they give way everywhere." "Go one of you to Colonel Burton," said Wolfe: "tell him to march Webbe's (the 48th) regiment with all speed down to the St. Charles River, to cut off the retreat." His voice grew faint as he spoke, and he turned as if seeking an easier position on his side; when he had given this last order, he seemed to feel that he had done his duty, and added feebly, but distinctly—"Now, God be praised, I die happy." His eyes then closed; and, after a few convulsive movements, he became still. Despite the anguish of his wounds, he died happy; for through the mortal shades that fell upon his soul, there rose over the unknown world's horizon, the dawn of an eternal morning.—*The Conquest of Canada*, 1849.

Quebec witnessed the fall of James Wolfe: a young hero, whose name is worthy to be placed in the same rank with those of the Grecian annals; a man of extraordinary acuteness and energy of mind, whose soul was equally superior to pride and suspicion, and who, in his virtues, perhaps in his magnanimity, but specially in the circumstances of his death, closely resembled Epaminondas.—*John Von Müller, Universal History*, B. xxiii. § 8.]

In worth exceeding, and in virtue great,
Words would want force his actions to relate.
Silence, ye bards! eulogiums vain forbear,
It is enough to say that Wolfe lies here.

EPIGRAM

ON THE NUMEROUS EPITAPHS FOR GENERAL WOLFE;

FOR THE BEST OF WHICH A PREMIUM OF £100 WAS PROMISED.

[This 'Premium' seems indeed to have set the whole tribe of scribblers a-writing. The 'Magazines' of the period are "written within and without" with 'Epitaphs' and 'Elegies.' They are all nearly on a par with Fergusson's—that is, worthless. Perhaps I should except the 'Epigram' which is annexed.]

THE Muse, a shameless mercenary jade!
Has now assumed the arch-tongued lawyer's trade;
In Wolfe's deserving praises silent she,
Till flatter'd with the prospect of a fee.

ON A PREMIUM OF £100

BEING OFFERED FOR THE BEST EPITAPH ON GENERAL WOLFE.

ONE hundred pounds! too small a boon
To set the Poet's muse in tune
That nothing might escape her.
What? Wolfe's achievements to relate
With every action good and great?
Pshaw! 'twould'nt buy the paper.

GOOD EATING.

HEAR, O ye host of Epicurus! hear!
Each portly form, whose overhanging paunch
Can well denote the all-transcendent joy

That springs unbounded from fruition full
Of rich repast; to you I consecrate
The song advent'rous; happy if the Muse
Can cook the numbers to your palates keen,
Or send but half the relish with her song,
That smoking *sirloins* to your souls convey.
Hence now, ye starvelings wan! whose empty wombs
Oft echo to the hollow murmuring tones
Of hunger fell.—Avaunt, ye base-born hinds!
Whose fates unkind ne'er destined you to gorge
The banquet rare, or wage a pleasing war
With the delicious morsels of the earth.
To you I sing not: for alas! what pain,
What tantalizing tortures would ensue,
To aid the force of famine's sharpest tooth,
Were I to breathe my accents in your ear!
Hail, Roast Beef! monarch of the festive throng,
To hunger's bane the strongest antidote;
Come, and with all thy rage-appeasing sweets
Our appetites allay: For, or attended
By root Hibernian, or plumb-pudding rare,
Still thou art welcome to the social board.
Say, can the spicy gales from orient blown,
Or zephyrs wing, that from the orange groves
Brushes the breeze, with rich perfumes replete,
More aromatic or reviving smell
To nostrils bring? Or can the glassy streams
Of Pactolus, that o'er its golden sands
Delightful glide, thy luscious drops outvie
That from thy sides imbrown'd unnumber'd fall?
Behold, at thy approach what smiles serene
Beam from the ravish'd guests.—Still are their tongues,
While they with whetted instruments prepare
For deep incision.—Now the abscess bleeds,

And the devouring band, with stomachs keen
And glutting rage, thy beauteous form destroy,
Leave you a marrowless skeleton and bare,
A prey to dunghills, or vexatious sport
Of torrent rushing from defilement's urns,
That o'er the city's flinty pavement hurls.

So fares it with the man, whose powerful pelf
Once could command respect. Caress'd by all,
His bounties were as lavish as the hand
Of yellow Ceres, till his stores decay'd,
And then (O dismal tale!) those precious drops
Of flattery that bedew'd his spring of fortune,
Leave the sad winter of his state so fall'n,
Nor nurse the thorn from which they ne'er can hope
Again to pluck the odour-dropping rose.

For thee, roast beef! in variegated shapes
Have mortals toil'd.—The sailor sternly braves
The strength of Boreas, and exulting stands
Upon the sea-wash'd deck—with hopes inspired
Of yet indulging in thy wish'd for sweets,
He smiles amidst the dangers that surround him;
Cheerful he steers to cold forbidding climes,
Or to the torrid zone explores his way.

Be kind, ye Powers! and still propitious send
This paragon of feeding to our halls;
With this regaled, who would vain-glorious wish
For towering pyramids superbly crown'd,
With jellies, syllabubs, or ice-creams rare?
These can amuse the eye, and may bestow
A short-lived pleasure to a palate strange;
But for a moment's pleasure, who would vend
A life-time that would else be spent in joy,
For hateful loathings and for gouty rheums,
Ever preceded by indulged excess?

Blest be those walls where hospitality
And welcome reign at large! There may you oft
Of social cheer partake, and love and joy,
Pleasures that to the human mind convey
Ideal pictures of the bliss supreme:
But near the gate where Parsimony dwells,
Where Ceremony cool, and brow austere,
Confront the guests, ne'er let thy foot approach;
For, void of kind benevolence, heavenly virtue!
What is life's garden but a devious wild,
Through which the traveller must pass forlorn,
Unguided by the aid of friendship's ray?
Rather if poverty hold converse with thee,
To the lone garret's lofty bield ascend,
Or dive to some sad cell; there have recourse
To meagre offals, where, though small thy fare,
Freedom shall wing thee to a purer joy
Than banquets with superfluous dainties crown'd,
Mix'd with reserve and coolness, can afford.

But, if your better fortunes have prepared
Your purse with ducats, and with health thy frame,
Assemble, friends! and to the tavern straight,
Where the officious drawer, bending low,
Is passive to a fault. Then, nor the Signior grand,
Or Russia's empress,[1] signaliz'd for war,
Can govern with more arbitrary sway.

Ye who for health, for exercise, for air,
Oft saunter from Edina's smoke-capt spires,
And, by the grassy hill or dimpled brook
An appetite revive, should oft-times stray
O'er Arthur's-seat's green pastures to the town,
For sheep-heads and bone-bridges famed of yore,[2]

1 Catherine.
2 The village of Duddingstone, near Edinburgh, which was then fa-

That in our country's annals stands yclept
Fair Duddingstonia, where you may be bless'd
With simple fare and vegetable sweets,
Freed from the clamours of the busy world.
Or, if for recreation you should stray
To Leithian shore, and breathe the keener air
Wafted from Neptune's empire of the main;
If appetite invite, and cash prevail,
Ply not your joints upon the homeward track,
Till Lawson,[1] chiefest of the Scottish hosts!
To nimble-footed waiters give command
The cloth to lay.—Instinctively they come,
And lo! the table, wrapt in cloudy steams,
Groans with the weight of the transporting fare
That breathes frankincense on the guests around.
Now, while stern Winter holds his frigid sway,
And to a period spins the closing year;
While festivals abound, and sportive hours
Kill the remembrance of our weaning time,
Let not Intemperance, destructive fiend!
Gain entrance to your halls.—Despoil'd by him,
Shall cloyed appetite, forerunner sad
Of rank disease, invet'rate clasp your frame.
Contentment shall no more be known to spread
Her cherub wings round thy once happy dwelling,
But misery of thought, and racking pain,
Shall plunge you headlong to the dark abyss.

mous for certain 'sheep-head' dinners. The crania being afterwards placed, says Chambers, committing an exquisite bull, as stepping-*stones* across pools in the street, the place was quizzically spoken of as a great City possessing a hundred bone bridges.

1 This Tavern was in a large gruesome old house (dated 1678) on the Shore at Leith, not far from the flag-house at the end of the pier. It still exists, but as a private dwelling.

THE DELIGHTS OF VIRTUE.

Returning morn, in orient blush array'd,
With gentle radiance hail'd the sky serene;
No rustling breezes waved the verdant shade,
Nor swelling surge disturb'd the azure main.

These moments, Meditation, sure are thine;
These are the halcyon joys you wish to find,
When nature's peaceful elements combine
To suit the calm composure of the mind.

The Muse, exalted by thy sacred power,
To the green mountain's air-born summit flew,
Charm'd with the thoughtful stillness of an hour,
That usher'd beaming fancy to her view.

Fresh from old Neptune's fluid mansion sprung
The sun, reviver of each drooping flower;
At his approach the lark, with matin song,
In notes of gratitude confess'd his power.

So shines fair Virtue, shedding light divine
On those who wish to profit by her ways;
Who ne'er at parting with their vice repine,
To taste the comforts of her blissful rays.

She with fresh hopes each sorrow can beguile,
Can dissipate Adversity's stern gloom,
Make meagre Poverty contented smile,
And the sad wretch forget his hapless doom.

Sweeter than shady groves in summer's pride,
Than flowery dales or grassy meads is she;

Delightful as the honeyed streams that glide
From the rich labours of the busy bee.

Her paths and alleys are for ever green;
There Innocence, in snowy robes array'd,
With smiles of pure content, is hail'd the queen
And happy mistress of the sacred shade.

O let no transient gleam of earthly joy
From Virtue lure your lab'ring steps aside;
Nor instant grandeur future hopes annoy
With thoughts that spring from insolence and pride.

Soon will the winged moments speed away,
When you'll no more the plumes of honour wear:
Grandeur must shudder at the sad decay,
And Pride look humble when he ponders there.

Deprived of Virtue, where is Beauty's power?
Her dimpled smiles, her roses charm no more;
So much can guilt the loveliest form deflower:
We loath that beauty which we loved before.

How fair are Virtue's buds where'er they blow,
Or in the desert wild or garden gay!
Her flowers how sacred wheresoe'er they show,
Unknown to the [vile] canker of decay!

CHARACTER OF A FRIEND,

IN AN EPITAPH WHICH HE DESIRED THE AUTHOR TO WRITE.

Under this turf to mould'ring earth consign'd,
Lies he who once was fickle as the wind.

Alike the scenes of good and ill he knew,
From the chaste temple to the lewdest stew.
Virtue and vice in him alternate reign'd;
That fill'd his mind, and this his pocket drain'd,
Till in the contest they so stubborn grew,
Death gave the parting blow, and both withdrew.

A TAVERN ELEGY.

Fled are the moments of delusive mirth,
The fancy'd pleasure! paradise divine!
Hush'd are the clamours that derive their birth
From generous floods of soul reviving wine.

Still night and silence now succeed their noise;
The erring tides of passion rage no more;
But all is peaceful as the ocean's voice
When breezeless waters kiss the silent shore.

Here stood the juice whose care controlling powers
Could ev'ry human misery subdue,
And wake to sportive joy the lazy hours,
That to the languid senses hateful grew.

Attracted by the magic of the bowl,
Around the swelling brim in full array
The glasses circled, as the planets roll,
And hail with borrow'd light the god of day.

Here music, the delight of moments gay!
Bade the unguarded tongues their motion cease,
And with a mirthful, a melodious lay,
Awed the fell voice of discord into peace.

These are the joys that virtue must approve,
  While reason shines with majesty divine,
Ere our ideas in disorder move,
  And sad excess against the soul combine.

What evils have not frenzied mortals done
  By wine, that *ignis fatuus* of the mind!
How many by its force to vice are won,
  Since first ordain'd to tantalize mankind?

By Bacchus' power, ye sons of riot, say,
  How many watchful sentinels have bled;
How many travellers have lost their way,
  By lamps unguided through the ev'ning shade!

O spare those friendly twinklers of the night;
  Let no rude cane their hallow'd orbs assail.
For cowardice alone condemns the light,
  That shows her countenance aghast and pale.

Now the short taper warns me to depart
  Ere darkness shall assume his dreary sway;
Ere solitude fall heavy on my heart,
  That lingers for the far approach of day.

Who would not vindicate the happy doom
  To be for ever number'd with the dead,
Rather than bear the miserable gloom,
  When all his comfort, all his friends are fled?

Bear me, ye gods! where I may calmly rest
  From all the follies of the night secure,
The balmy blessings of repose to taste,
  Nor hear the tongue of outrage at my door.

THE SOW OF FEELING.

Well! I protest there's no such thing as dealing
With these starch'd poets—with these Men of Feeling!
Epilogue to the Prince of Tunis.[1]

Malignant planets! do ye still combine
Against this wayward dreary life of mine!
Has pitiless oppression—cruel case!
Gain'd sole possession of the human race?
By cruel hands has every virtue bled,
And innocence from men to vultures fled!
Thrice happy, had I lived in Jewish time,
When swallowing pork or pig was deem'd a crime;
My husband long had blest my longing arms,
Long, long had known love's sympathetic charms!
My children too—a little suckling race,
With all their father growing in their face,
From their prolific dam had ne'er been torn,
Nor to the bloody stalls of butchers borne.
Ah! luxury! to you my being owes
Its load of misery—its load of woes!
With heavy heart, I saunter all the day,
Gruntle and murmur all my hours away!
In vain I try to summon old desire,
For favourite sports—for wallowing in the mire.
Thoughts of my husband—of my children slain,
Turn all my wonted pleasure into pain!
How oft did we, in Phœbus warming ray,
Bask on the humid softness of the clay?

1 This Epilogue was spoken by Mrs. Weston, and appears in the 'Weekly Magazine' 1773. This 'Prince' was almost *still*-born, and had a very short 'reign.' He was one of the Dramatic children of Henry Mackenzie, the Author of the Man of Feeling, a very amiable but inane and puling writer.

Oft did his lusty head defend my tail
From the rude whispers of the angry gale!
While nose-refreshing puddles stream'd around,
And floating odours hail'd the dung-clad ground.
Near by a rustic mill's enchanting clack,
Where plenteous bushels load the peasant's back,
In straw-crown'd hovel, there to life we came,
One boar our father and one sow our dam:
While tender infants on the mother's breast,
A flame divine on either shone confest;
In riper hours love's more than ardent blaze,
Enkindled all his passion, all his praise!
No deadly, sinful passion fired his soul,
Virtue o'er all his actions gain'd control:
That cherub which attracts the female heart,
And makes them soonest with their beauty part,
Attracted mine:—I gave him all my love,
In the recesses of a verdant grove:
'Twas there I listen'd to his warmest vows,
Amidst the pendant melancholy boughs;
'Twas there my trusty lover shook for me
A shower of acorns from the oaken tree;
And from the teeming earth, with joy, plough'd out
The roots salubrious with his hardy snout.
But Happiness, a floating meteor thou,
That still inconstant art to man and sow,
Left us in gloomiest horrors to reside,
Near by the deep-dyed sanguinary tide,
Where whetting steel prepares the butch'ring knives,
With greater ease to take the harmless lives
Of cows, and calves, and sheep, and hog, who fear
The bite of bull-dogs, that incessant tear
Their flesh, and keenly suck the blood-distilling ear!

At length the day, th' eventful day drew near,
Detested cause of many a briny tear!
I'll weep till sorrow shall my eye-lids drain,
A tender husband, and a brother slain!
Alas! the lovely languor of his eye,
When the base murderers bore him captive by!
His mournful voice! the music of his groans,
Had melted any hearts—but hearts of stones!
O! had some angel at that instant come,
Given me four nimble fingers and a thumb,
The blood-stain'd blade I'd turn'd upon his foe,
And sudden sent him to the shades below—
Where, or Pythagoras' opinion jests,
Beasts are made butchers—butchers changed to beasts.[1]

In early times the law had wise decreed,
For human food but reptiles few should bleed;
But monstrous man, still erring from the laws,
The curse of heaven on his banquet draws!
Already has he drain'd the marshes dry
For frogs, new emblems of his luxury;
And soon the toad and lizard will come home,
Pure victims to the hungry glutton's womb:
Cats, rats, and mice, their destiny may mourn,
In time their carcases on spits must turn;
They may rejoice to-day—while I resign
Life, to be number'd 'mongst the feeling swine.

1 Similarly Gay transforms the 'cruel coachman' into his 'hack' in the future world.—*Trivia.*

EPILOGUE

SPOKEN BY MR. WILSON, AT THE THEATRE-ROYAL, IN THE CHARACTER OF AN EDINBURGH BUCK.[1]

Ye who oft finish care in Lethe's cup,
Who love to swear, and roar, and keep it up,
List to a brother's voice, whose sole delight
Is sleep all day and riot all the night.
Last night, when potent draughts of mellow wine
Did sober reason into wit refine;
When lusty Bacchus had contrived to drain
The sullen vapours from our shallow brain,
We sallied forth (for valour's dazzling sun
Up to his bright meridian had run);
And like renowned Quixotte and his squire,
Spoils and adventures were our sole desire.
First we approach'd a seeming sober dame,
Preceded by a lanthorn's pallid flame,
Borne by a livery'd puppy's servile hand,
The slave obsequious of her stern command.
Curse on those cits, said I, who dare disgrace
Our streets at midnight with a sober face;
Let never tallow-chandler give them light,
To guide them through the dangers of the night.
The valet's cane we snatch'd, and, demme! I
Made the frail lanthorn on the pavement lie.
The guard, still watchful of the lieges' harm,
With slow-paced motion stalk'd at the alarm.

1 Mr. William Martin, Auctioneer and Bookseller of facetious memory, was wont to recite this Epilogue at his famous 'parties.' [Kay's Portraits, p. 43. Vol. I.] Wilson was a popular second-rate Actor. There is a portrait of him [?] in the character of 'Patie' prefixed to Morison and Son's edition of the Gentle Shepherd, 1780. Perth, 1 Vol. 12mo.

Guard, seize the rogues—the angry madam cried,
And all the guard with Seize ta rogue replied.
As in a war, there's nothing judged so right
As a concerted and prudential flight;
So we from guard and scandal to be freed,
Left them the field and burial of their dead.
Next we approach'd the bounds of George's square,
Blest place! No watch, no constables come there.
Now had they borrow'd Argus' eyes who saw us,
All was made dark and desolate as chaos:
Lamps tumbled after lamps, and lost their lustres,
Like Doomsday, when the stars shall fall in clusters.
Let fancy paint what dazzling glory grew
From crystal gems, when Phœbus came in view;
Each shatter'd orb ten thousand fragments strews,
And a new sun in every fragment shows.
Hear then, my Bucks! how drunken fate decreed us
For a nocturnal visit to the Meadows,[1]
And how we, val'rous champions, durst engage,
O deed unequall'd! both the Bridge and Cage,[2]
The rage of perilous winters which had stood,
This 'gainst the wind, and that against the flood;
But what nor wind, nor flood, nor heav'n could bend e'er,
We tumbled down, my Bucks, and made surrender.
What are your far-famed warriors to us,
'Bout whom historians make such mighty fuss:
Posterity may think it was uncommon
That Troy should be pillaged for a woman;
But ours your ten years' sieges will excel,
And justly be esteem'd the nonpareil.
Our cause is slighter than a dame's betrothing,
For all these mighty feats have sprung from nothing.

1 Note 1, p. 27.

2 The 'Cage' was a small building at the end of the central walk in the Meadows. The 'Bridge' crossed a small stream in the same walk.

THE ANTIQUARY.

[The Editor is indebted to Mr. David Laing, Keeper of the Signet Library, (a gentleman who is not more capable than he is ever anxious to assist all who make application to him. To no one is Scottish literature more indebted,) for this Poem, which has never before been published. It is from a MS. copy in the handwriting of Mr. David Herd, the well known Editor of Scottish Songs. It is entitled 'Poem by R. Fergusson 1773.' It is supposed to describe James Cummyns of the Herald Office, who was, along with the Poet and Herd, a Knight of the Cape. Vid. Life prefixed, p. lxxiii.]

Just now in fair Edina lives,
That famous antient town,
At a known place hight Black fry'rs wynd
A knight of old renown.

A Druid's sacred form he bears
With saucer eyes of fire,
An antique hat on's head he wears
Like Ramsay the town cryer.

Down in the wynd his mansion stands,
All gloomy dark within,
Here mangled books like blood and bones
Strew'd in a giant's den.

Crude—indigested—half-devoured—
On groaning shelves they're thrown,
Such manuscripts no eye can read—
No hand write, but his own.

No prophet, he like Sydrophel
Can future times explore—
But what *has* happen'd he can tell
Five hundred years and more.

A walking alm'nack he appears
Stept from some mouldy wall,
Worn out of use, through dust and years
Like scutcheons in his hall.

By rusty coins old kings he'll trace,
And know their air and mien—
King Fergus he knows well by face
Though George he ne'er has seen.

This wight th' outsides of Churches lov'd
Almost unto a sin,
Spires Gothic of more use he prov'd
Than pulpits are within.

Ye jack-daws, that are us'd to talk
Like us of [th'] human race,—
When nigh you see J—— C —— walk
Loud chatter forth his praise.

When e'er the fatal day shall come—
For come, alas! it must—
When this good Knight must stay at home
And turn to antique dust;

The solemn dirge ye owls prepare,
Ye bats, more hoarsely skreek—
Croak, all ye ravens, round the bier,
And all ye church-mice squeak [!]

THE BUGS.

[The garrulous Wodrow, in his Analecta, presents us with a quaint notice of the introduction of 'Bugs' into Scotland. Under date October 3d, 1727, there is the following entry. "The vermin called buggs are at present extremely troublesome at Glasgow. They say that they are come over with timber and other goods from Holland. They are in many houses there, and they are so prolifick there, there is no getting rid off them, though many ways have been tryed to get rid off them. Its not twenty years since they were knowen, and such as had them keeped them secret. These six or seven years they are more openly complained off, and now the half of the town are plagued with them. This is chiefly attributed to the frequent alterations of servants, who bring them from house to house."]

Thou source of song sublime! thou chiefest Muse!
Whose sacred fountain of immortal fame
Bedew'd the flowerets cull'd for Homer's brow,
When he on Grecian plains the battles sung
Of frogs and mice[1]—do thou, through Fancy's maze
Of sportive pastime, lead a lowly Muse
Her rites to join, while, with a faltering voice,
She sings of reptiles yet in song unknown.
Nor you, ye Bards! who oft have struck the lyre,
And tuned it to the movement of the spheres
In harmony divine, reproach the lays,
Which, though they wind not through the starry host
Of bright creation, or on earth delight
To hunt the murm'ring cadence of the floods
Through scenes where Nature, with a hand profuse,
Hath lavish strew'd her gems of precious dye;
Yet, in the small existence of a gnat,
Or tiny bug, doth she, with equal skill,

1 The Batrachomyomachia.

If not transcending, stamp her wonders there,
Only disclosed to microscopic eye.
Of old the Dryads[1] near Edina's walls
Their mansions rear'd, and groves unnumber'd rose
Of branching oak, spread beech, and lofty pine,
Under whose shade, to shun the noontide blaze,
Did Pan resort, with all his rural train
Of shepherds and of nymphs. The Dryads pleased,
Would hail their sports, and summon echo's voice,
To send her greetings through the waving woods;
But the rude axe, long brandish'd by the hand
Of daring innovation, shaved the lawns;
Then not a thicket or a copse remain'd
To sigh in concert with the breeze of eve.
Edina's mansions with lignarian art[1]
Were piled and fronted. Like an ark she seem'd
To lie on mountain's top, with shapes replete,
Clean and unclean, that daily wander o'er
Her streets, that once were spacious, once were gay.
To Jove the Dryads pray'd, nor pray'd in vain,
For vengeance on her sons. At midnight drear
Black showers descend, and teeming myriads rise
Of bugs abhorrent, who by instinct steal
Through the diseased and corrosive pores
Of sapless trees, that late in forest stood
With all the majesty of summer crown'd.
By Jove's command dispersed, they wander wide
O'er all the city. Some their cells prepare

1 There is a tradition, says Chambers, that one of the King Jameses, in order to clear the forest, which in his time encumbered the ground to the south of Edinburgh, and which proved a retreat for banditti, gave the citizens permission to extend their houses seven feet forward into the street by means of wooden balconies, using the timber of that forest as the material. Of this tradition or fact, he remarks, Fergusson 'neatly' takes advantage. 'Neatly' certainly: but Wodrow proves it to be an anachronism.

'Midst the rich trappings and the gay attire
Of state luxuriant, and are fond to press
The waving canopy's depending folds;
While others, destined to an humbler fate,
Seek shelter from the dwellings of the poor,
Plying their nightly suction in the bed
Of toil'd mechanic, who, with folded arms,
Enjoys the comforts of a sleep so sound,
That not th' alarming sting of glutting bug
To murd'rous deed can rouse his brawny arm
Upon the blood-swoln fiend, who basely steals
Life's genial current from his throbbing veins.
Happy were Grandeur, could she triumph here,
And banish from her halls each misery,
Which she must brook in common with the poor,
Who beg subsistence from her sparing hands;
Then might the rich, to fell disease unknown,
Indulge in fond excess, nor ever feel
The slowly creeping hours of restless night,
When shook with guilty horrors. But the wind,
Whose fretful gusts of anger shake the world,
Bears more destructive on th' aspiring roofs
Of dome and palace, than on cottage low,
That meets Æolus with his gentler breath,
When safely shelter'd in the peaceful vale.
Is there a being breathes, howe'er so vile,
Too pitiful for Envy? She, with venom'd tooth
And grinning madness, frowns upon the bliss
Of every species; from the human form
That spurns the earth, and bends his mental eye
Through the profundity of space unknown,
Down to the crawling bug's detested race.
Thus the lover pines, that reptile rude
Should 'midst the lilies of fair Chloe's breast

Implant the deep carnation, and enjoy
Those sweets which angel modesty hath hid
From eyes profane. Yet murmur not, ye few
Who gladly would be bugs for Chloe's sake!
For soon, alas! the fluctuating gales
Of earthly joy invert the happy scene.
The breath of spring may, with her balmy power,
And warmth diffusive, give to Nature's face
Her brightest colours; but how short the space!
Till angry Eurus, from his petrid cave,
Deform the year, and all these sweets annoy.
  Ev'n so befalls it to this creeping race,
This envy'd commonwealth. For they a while
On Chloe's bosom, alabaster fair,
May steal ambrosial bliss—or may regale
On the rich viands of luxurious blood,
Delighted and sufficed. But mark the end:
Lo! Whitsuntide appears with gloomy train
Of growing desolation. First upholsterer rude
Removes the waving drapery, where, for years,
A thriving colony of old and young
Had hid their numbers from the prying day;
Anon they fall, and gladly would retire
To safer ambush, but his merciless foot,
Ah, cruel pressure! cracks their vital springs,
And with their deep-dyed scarlet smears the floor.
  Sweet powers! has pity in the female breast
No tender residence, no loved abode,
To urge from murderous deed th' avenging hand
Of angry housemaid? She'll have blood for blood!
For lo! the boiling streams from copper tube,
Hot as her rage, sweep myriads to death.
Their carcases are destined to the urn
Of some chaste Naiad, that gives birth to floods,

Whose fragrant virtues hail Edina, famed
For yellow limpid—whose chaste name the Muse
Thinks too exalted to retail in song.
Ah me! No longer they at midnight shade,
With baneful sting, shall seek the downy couch
Of slumbering mortals. Nor shall love-sick swain,
When, by the bubbling brook, in fairy dream,
His nymph, but half reluctant to his wish,
Is gently folded in his eager arms,
E'er curse the shaft envenom'd, that disturbs
His long-loved fancies. Nor shall hungry bard,
Whose strong imagination, whetted keen,
Conveys him to the feast, be tantalized
With poisonous tortures, when the cup, brimful
Of purple vintage, gives him greater joy
Than all the Heliconian streams that play
And murmur round Parnassus. Now the wretch,
Oft doom'd to restless days and sleepless nights,
By bugbear conscience thrall'd, enjoys an hour
Of undisturb'd repose. The miser, too,
May brook his golden dreams, nor wake with fear
That thieves or kindred (for no soul he'll trust)
Have broke upon his chest, and strive to steal
The shining idols of his useless hours.
Happy the bug, whose unambitious views
To gilded pomp ne'er tempt him to aspire!
Safely may he, enwrapt in russet fold
Of cobweb'd curtain, set at bay the fears
That still attendant are on bugs of state.
He never knows at morn the busy brush
Of scrubbing chambermaid. His coursing blood
Is ne'er obstructed with obnoxious dose
By Oliphant prepar'd; too pois'nous drug!
As deadly fatal to this crawling tribe
As ball and powder to the sons of war.

TEA.[1]

Ye maidens modest! on whose sullen brows
Hath weaning chastity her wrinkles cull'd,
Who constant labour o'er consumptive oil
At midnight knell, to wash sleep's nightly balm
From closing eye-lids, with the grateful drops
Of Tea's blest juices—list the obsequious lays
That come not with Parnassian honours crown'd
To dwell in murmurs o'er your sleepy sense,
But fresh from Orient blown to chase far off
Your lethargy, that dormant needles roused
May pierce the waving mantua's silken folds:
For many a dame, in chamber sadly pent,
Hath this reviving limpid call'd to life;
And well it did, to mitigate the frowns
Of anger reddening on Lucinda's brow
With flash malignant, that had harbour'd there,
If she at masquerade, or play, or ball,
Appear'd not in her newest, best attire.
But Venus, goddess of th' eternal smile,
Knowing that stormy brows but ill become
Fair patterns of her beauty, hath ordain'd
Celestial Tea—a fountain that can cure
The ills of passion, and can free the fair
From frowns and sighs from disappointment earn'd.
To her, ye fair, in adoration bow!
Whether at blushing morn, or dewy eve;

1 This leaf was first imported into Europe by the Dutch East India Company, in the early part of the 17th century; but it was not until the year 1666 that a small quantity was brought over from Holland to this country by Lords Arlington and Ossory; and yet, from a period much earlier than any to which the memories of the existing generation, extend tea has been one of the ordinary necessaries of life among all classes of the community. We feel, with all our patriotism, we could hardly return to the "Sage" and "Wild thyme" recommended by the poet.

Her smoking cordials greet your fragrant board,
With Sushong, Congo, or coarse Bohea crown'd.
At midnight skies, ye mantua-makers, hail
The sacred offering: for the haughty belles
No longer can upbraid your lingering hands
With trains upborne aloft by dusty gales
That sweep the ball-room. Swift they glide along,
And, with their sailing streamers, catch the eye
Of some Adonis, mark'd to love a prey,
Whose bosom ne'er had panted with a sigh,
But for the silken draperies that enclose
Graces which nature has by art conceal'd.
Mark well the fair! observe their modest eye,
With all the innocence of beauty blest.
Could slander o'er that tongue its power retain
Whose breath is music? Ah, fallacious thought!
The surface is ambrosia's mingled sweets;
But all below is death. At tea-board met,
Attend their prattling tongues; they scoff, they rail
Unbounded; but their darts are chiefly aim'd
At some gay fair whose beauties far eclipse
Her dim beholders, who, with haggard eyes,
Would blight those charms where raptures long have dwelt
In ecstacy delighted and sufficed.
In vain hath Beauty, with her varied robe,
Bestow'd her glowing blushes o'er her cheeks,
And call'd attendant graces to her aid,
To blend the scarlet and the lily fair.
In vain did Venus in her fav'rite mould
Adapt the slender form to Cupid's choice;
When Slander comes, her blasts too fatal prove;
Pale are those cheeks where youth and beauty glow'd,
Where smiles, where freshness, and where roses grew:
Ghastly and wan their Gorgon picture comes

With every fury grinning from the looks
Of frightful monster. Envy's hissing tongue
With deepest vengeance wounds, and every wound
With deeper canker, deeper poison teems.
O gold! thy luring lustre first prevail'd
On man to tempt the fretful winds and waves,
And hunt new fancies. Still thy glaring form
Bids commerce thrive, and o'er the Indian waves,
O'er-stemming danger, draw the lab'ring keel
From China's coast to Britain's colder clime,
Fraught with the fruits and herbage of their vales.
In them whatever vegetable springs,
How loathsome and corrupted, triumphs here,
The bane of life, of health the sure decay;
Yet, yet we swallow, and extol the draught,
Though nervous ails should spring, and vapourish qualms
Our senses and our appetites destroy.
Look round, ye sipplers of the poison'd cup
From foreign plant distilled! no more repine
That nature, sparing of her sacred sweets,
Hath doom'd you in a wilderness to dwell,
While round Britannia's streams she kindly rears
Green sage and wild thyme. These were sure decreed
As plants of Britain to regale her sons
With native moisture, more refreshing sweet,
And more profuse of health and vigour's balm,
Than all the stems that India can boast.

AN EXPEDITION TO FIFE,

AND THE ISLAND OF MAY, ON BOARD THE BLESSED ENDEAVOUR OF DUNBAR, CAPTAIN ROXBURGH COMMANDER.[1]

List, O ye slumberers on the peaceful shore,
Whose lives are one unvariegated calm
Of stillness and of sloth! And hear, O nymph!
In heaven yclepit Pleasure; from your throne
Effulgent send a heavenly radiant beam,
That, cheer'd by thee, the Muse may bend her way;
For from no earthly flight she builds her song,
But from the bosom of green Neptune's main
Would fain emerge, and, under Phœbe's reign,
Transmit her numbers to inclining ears.

Now when the choiring songsters quit the groves,
And solemn sounding whisp'rings lull the spray
To meditation sacred, let me roam
O'er the blest floods that wash our natal shore,
And view the wonders of the deep profound,
While now the western breezes reign around,
And Boreas, sleeping in his iron cave,
Regains his strength and animated rage,
To wake new tempests and inswell new seas.

And now Favonius wings the sprightly gale;
The willing canvass, swelling with the breeze,
Gives life and motion to our bounding prow,
While the hoarse boatswain's pipe shrill sounding far,
Calls all the tars to action. Hardy sons!
Who shudder not at life's devouring gales,
But smile amidst the tempest's sounding jars,
Or 'midst the hollow thunders of the war:

1 Vid. Life prefixed.

Fresh sprung from Greenland's cold, they hail with joy
The happier clime, the fresh autumnal breeze
By Syrius guided to allay the heat
That else would parch the vigour of their veins.
Hard change, alas! from petrifying cold
Instant to plunge to the severest ray
That burning Dog-star or bright Phœbus sheds.
Like comet whirling through th' ethereal void,
Now they are reddened with the solar blaze,
Now froze and tortured by the frigid zone.
Thrice happy Britons! whose well temper'd clay
Can face all climes, all tempests, and all seas.
These are the sons that check the growing war;
These are the sons that hem Britannia round
From sudden innovation, awe the shores,
And make their drooping pendants hail her queen
And mistress of the globe. They guard our beds,
While fearless we enjoy secure repose,
And all the blessings of a bounteous sky.
To them in fev'rous adoration bend,
Ye fashion'd Macaronies! whose bright blades
Were never dimm'd or stain'd with hostile blood,
But still hang dangling on your feeble thigh,
While through the Mall or Park you show away,
Or through the drawing-room on tiptoe steal.
On poop aloft, to messmates laid along,
Some son of Neptune, whose old wrinkled brow
Has bay'd the rattling thunder, tells his tale
Of dangers, sieges, and of battles dire,
While they, elate with success of the day,
Cheer him with happy smiles, or bitter sighs,
When fortune with a sourer aspect grins.
Ah! how unstable are the joys of life;
The pleasures, ah! how few!—Now smile the skies

With visage mild, and now the thunders shake,
And all the radiance of the heavens deflower.
Through the small op'ning of the mainsail broad,
Lo, Boreas steals, and tears him from the yard,
Where long and lasting he has played his part.
So suffers Virtue. When in her fair form
The smallest flaw is found, the whole decays.
In vain she may implore with piteous eye,
And spread her naked pinions to the blast.
A reputation maim'd finds no repair
Till death, the ghastly monarch, shuts the scene.
And now we gain the May, whose midnight light,
Like vestal virgins' off'rings undecay'd,
To mariners bewilder'd acts the part
Of social friendship, guiding those that err
With kindly radiance to their destined port.
Thanks, kindest Nature! for those floating gems,
Those green-grown isles, with which you lavish strew
Great Neptune's empire. But for thee, the main
Were an uncomfortable mazy flood.
No guidance then would bless the steersman's skill,
No resting place would crown the mariner's wish,
When he to distant gales his canvass spreads,
To search new wonders. Here the verdant shores
Teem with new freshness, and regale our sight
With caves that ancient time, in days of yore,
Sequester'd for the haunt of Druid lone,
There to remain in solitary cell
Beyond the power of mortals to disjoin
From holy meditation. Happy now
To cast our eyes around from shore to shore,
While by the oozy caverns on the beach
We wander wild, and listen to the roar
Of billows murmuring with incessant noise.

And now, by fancy led, we wander wild
Where o'er the rugged steep the buried dead
Remote lie anchor'd in their parent mould;
Where a few fading willows point the state
Of man's decay. Ah, death! where'er we fly,
Whether we seek the busy and the gay,
The mourner or the joyful, there art thou.
No distant isle, no surly swelling surge,
E'er awed thy progress, or controll'd thy sway,
To bless us with that comfort, length of days,
By all aspired at, but by few attain'd.
To Fife we steer, of all beneath the sun
The most unhallow'd 'midst the Scotian plains!
And here, sad emblem of deceitful times!
Hath sad hypocrisy her standard borne.
Mirth knows no residence, but ghastly fear
Stands trembling and appall'd at airy sights.
Once, only once! Reward it, O ye powers!
Did Hospitality, with open face,
And winning smile, cheer the deserted sight,
That else had languish'd for the blest return
Of beauteous day, to dissipate the clouds
Of endless night, and superstition wild,
That constant hover o'er the dark abode.
O happy Lothian! Happy thrice her sons!
Who ne'er yet ventured from the southern shore,
To tempt misfortune on the Fifan coast,
Again with thee we dwell, and taste thy joys,
Where sorrow reigns not, and where every gale
Is fraught with fullness, blest with living hope,
That fears no canker from the year's decay.

ON THE MUSIC BELLS PLAYING YESTERDAY FORENOON, PRIOR TO BROWN AND WILSON'S EXECUTION, ON THE DEACONS BEING PRESENTED TO COUNCIL.

["Yesterday afternoon, John Brown and James Wilson were executed in the Grass-market, pursuant to the sentence of the high court of justiciary, for the murder of Adam Thomson in Carnwathmuir, and their bodies delivered to the professor of anatomy for dissection.—They were both only about 26 years of age: Brown was upwards of six foot high, and remarkably strong, and both of them were well-made. They had made several efforts to escape from prison, in which they were as often detected; but when they found every attempt vain, they seemed reconciled to their fate, and at last, by the assiduity and persuasive influence of the clergyman who attended them, they were brought to a sense of their guilt, and a confession of the crime for which they were condemned. At the place of execution Brown addressed the audience in a short but pathetic speech, and both of them behaved in a manner suitable to their unhappy circumstances."]

HAPPY the folks that rule the roast!
Our council men are cheerful;
To mirth they now devote each toast,
And bells fill ev'ry ear full.

When man's condemn'd to suffer death
For his unlicens'd crimes,
Instead of psalms they quit their breath
To merry-making chimes.

TO SIR JOHN FIELDING,

ON HIS ATTEMPT TO SUPPRESS THE BEGGAR'S OPERA.

[Sir John Fielding was a half-brother of the immortal novelist, and succeeded him at Bow Street. Although blind from infancy, he was a most active and energetic magistrate. His attempt to suppress the piquant Opera of good-natured Gay called forth a host of pamphlets, squibs, &c. &c. all long ago somnolent. Fergusson's admiration of Gay blinded his judgment. Sir John was a benevolent promoter of the Magdalen Hospital, the Asylum and Marine Society, and was in every respect an estimable and well-meaning man. He died in 1780.]

When you censure the age,
Be cautious and sage,
Lest the courtiers offended should be;
When you mention vice or bribe,
'Tis so pat to all the tribe,
Each cries, it was levell'd at me.
[BEGGAR'S OPERA. ACT II. SC. X.] GAY.

'Tis woman that seduces all mankind.
[*Ibid.* ACT I. SC. II.] FILCH.

BENEATH what cheerful region of the sky
Shall wit, shall humour and the muses fly?
For ours, a cold, inhospitable clime,
Refuses quarter to the muse and rhyme.
If on her brows an envy'd laurel springs,
They shake its foliage, crop her growing wings,
That with the plumes of virtue wisely soar,
And all the follies of the age explore;
But should old Grub her rankest venom pour,
And ev'ry virtue with a vice deflower,
Her verse is sacred, Justices agree;
Even Justice Fielding signs the wise decree.
Let fortune-dealers, wise predictors! tell
From what bright planet Justice Fielding fell;

Augusta trembles at the awful name;
The darling tongue of liberty is tame,
Basely confined by him in Newgate chains,
Nor dare exclaim how harshly Fielding reigns.
In days when every mercer has his scale,
To tell what pieces lack, how few prevail,
I wonder not the low-born menial trade,
By partial Justice has aside been laid:
For she gives no discount for virtue worn,
Her aged joints are without mercy torn.
In vain, O Gay! thy muse explored the way
Of yore to banish the Italian lay,
Gave homely numbers sweet, though warmly strong;
The British chorus bless'd the happy song:
Thy manly voice and Albion's then were heard,
Felt by her sons, and by her sons revered:
Eunuchs, not men, now bear aloft the palm,
And o'er our senses pour lethargic balm.
The stage the truest mirror is of life;
Our passions there revolve in active strife;
Each character is there display'd to view;
Each hates his own, though well assured 'tis true.
No marvel then, that all the world should own,
In Peachum's treach'ry Justice Fielding's known,
Since thieves so common are, and Justice, you
Thieves to the gallows for reward pursue.
Had Gay by writing roused the stealing trade,
You'd been less active to suppress your bread;
For, trust me, when a robber loses ground,
You lose your living with your forty pound.
'Twas woman first that snatch'd the luring bait,
The tempter taught her to transgress and eat;
Though wrong the deed, her quick compunction told;
She banish'd Adam from an age of gold.

When women now transgress fair virtue's rules,
Men are their pupils, and the stews their schools;
From simple wh—d—m greater sins began
To shoot, to bloom, to centre all in man;
Footpads on Hounslow flourish here to day,
The next old Tyburn sweeps them all away;
For woman's falls, the cause of every wrong!
Men robb'd and murder'd, thieves at Tyburn strung.
In panting breasts to raise the fond alarm,
Make females in the cause of virtue warm,
Gay has compared them to the summer flower,
The boast and glory of an idle hour;
When cropp'd, it falls, shrinks, withers, and decays,
And to oblivion dark consigns its days.

Hath this a power to win the female heart
Back from its vice, from virtue ne'er to part?
If so, the wayward virgin will restore,
And murders, rapes, and plunders be no more.
These were the lays of him who virtue knew,
Revered her dictates, and practised them too;
No idle theorist in her stainless ways,
He gave the parent goddess all his days.

O Queensberry![1] his best and earliest friend,
All that his wit or learning could commend;
Best of patrons! the Muse's only pride!
Still in her pageant shalt thou first preside.

1 Charles, the proverbially good Duke of Queensberry, the Patron of Gay, was then [1773] alive with the weight of many summers on his honoured head.

EPIGRAM

ON SEEING SCALES USED IN A MASON LODGE.

Why should the Brethren, met in Lodge,
Adopt such awkward measures,
To set their scales and weights to judge
The value of their treasures?

The law laid down from age to age
How can they well o'ercome it?
For it forbids them to engage
With aught but line and plummet.

TO DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON:

FOOD FOR A NEW EDITION OF HIS DICTIONARY.

Let Wilkes and Churchill rage no more,
Tho' scarce provision, learning's good;
What can these hungry's next implore,
Even Samuel Johnson loves our food.

Rodondo.

Great Pedagogue! whose literarian lore,
With syllable and syllable conjoin'd,
To transmutate and varify, has learn'd
The whole revolving scientific names
That in the alphabetic columns lie,
Far from the knowledge of mortalic shapes,
As we, who never can peroculate
The miracles by thee miraculiz'd,
The Muse, silential long, with mouth apart
Would give vibration to stagnatic tongue,
And loud encomiate thy puissant name,

Eulogiated from the green decline
Of Thames's banks to Scoticanian shores,
Where Loch-lomondian liquids undulize.
To meminate thy name in after times,
The mighty mayor of each regalian town
Shall consignate thy work to parchment fair
In roll burgharian, and their tables all
Shall fumigate with fumigation strong:
Scotland, from perpendicularian hills,
Shall emigrate her fair muttonian store,
Which late had there in pedestration walk'd,
And o'er her airy heights perambuliz'd.
Oh, blackest execrations on thy head,
Edina shameless! tho' he came within
The bounds of your notation; though you knew
His honorific name, you noted not,
But basely suffer'd him to chariotize
Far from your tow'rs, with smoke that nubilate,
Nor drank one amicitial swelling cup
To welcome him convivial. Bailies all,
With rage inflated, catenations[1] tear,
Nor ever after be you vinculiz'd,
Since you that sociability denied
To him whose potent lexiphanian stile
Words can prolongate, and inswell his page
With what in others to a line's confin'd.
Welcome, thou verbal potentate and prince!
To hills and vallies, where emerging oats
From earth assuage our pauperty to bay,
And bless thy name, thy dictionarian skill,
Which there definitive will still remain,
And oft be speculiz'd by taper blue,
While youth studentious turn thy folio page.

1 Catenations. Vide *chains*.—JOHNSON.

Have you as yet, in per'patetic mood,
Regarded with the texture of the eye
The cave cavernick, where fraternal bard,
Churchill, depicted pauperated swains
With thraldom and bleak want, reducted sore,
Where Nature, coloriz'd, so coarsely fades
And puts her russet par'phernalia on?
Have you as yet the way explorified,
To let lignarian chalice, swell'd with oats,
Thy orifice approach? Have you as yet,
With skin fresh rubified by scarlet spheres,
Apply'd brimstonic unction to your hide,
To terrify the salamandrian fire
That from involuntary digits asks
The strong allaceration?—Or can you swill
The usquebalian flames of whiskey blue
In fermentation strong? have you apply'd
The kilt aerian to your Anglian thighs,
And with renunciation assigniz'd
Your breeches in Londona to be worn?
Can you, in frigor of Highlandian sky,
On heathy summits take nocturnal rest?
It cannot be—You may as well desire
An alderman leave *plum-puddenian* store,
And scratch the tegument from pottage-dish,
As bid thy countrymen, and thee conjoin'd,
Forsake stomachic joys. Then hie you home,
And be a malcontent, that naked hinds,
On lentils fed, can make your kingdom quake,
And tremulate Old England libertiz'd.

ON JOHNSON'S DICTIONARY.[1]

In love with a pedantic jargon,
Our poets now-a-days are far gone;
So that a man can't read their songs,
Unless he has the gift of tongues;
Or else, to make him understand,
Keeps Johnson's Lexicon at hand.
Be warn'd, young poet, and take heed,
That Johnson you with caution read:
Always attentively distinguish
The Greek and Latin words from English;
And never use such, as 'tis wise
Not to attempt to nat'ralize.
Suffice the following specimen,
To make the admonition plain.

Little of *anthropopathy* has he,
Who in yon fulgid *curricle* reclines
Alone; while I, *depauperated* bard!
The streets *pedestrious* scour; why with bland voice,
Bids he me not his *vectitation* share?
Alas! he fears my *lacerated* coat,
And visage pale with *frigorific* want,
Would bring *dedecoration* on his chaise.
Me miserable! that the Aonian hill
Is not *auriferous*, nor fit to bear

1 I place this second poem on 'Johnson' among Fergusson's: because I feel satisfied that it also is his production. It appeared in the 'Weekly Magazine' only a few months before the preceding one, and it is most unlikely that he would have published that, had not the former likewise been his. Moreover, in a fragment of a letter of our Poet's to Woods of the 'Theatre' the matter of the present verses occurs in prose. The italics sufficiently elucidate the cumbrous Latinizations of Johnson. These 'Verses' were published anonymously, but various of his acknowledged Poems appeared similarly.

The *farinaceous* food, support of bards
Carnivorous but seldom; yet the soil
Which Hippocrene *humectates*, nothing yields
But sterile laurels and aquaticks sour.
To *dulcify* th' *absinthiated* cup
Of life, receiv'd from thy *novercal* hand,
Shall I have nothing, muse? To lenify
Thy heart *indurate*, shall poetic woe
And plaintive *ejulation* nought avail?
Riches *desiderate* I never did,
Ev'n when in mood most *optative*; a farm,
Small, but *aprique*, was all I ever wish'd.
I, when a rustic, wou'd my *blatant* calves
Well pleas'd *ablactate*, and delighted tend
My *gemilliparous* sheep; nor scorn to rear
The *superb* turkey and the *fripant* goose;
Then to *dendrology* my thoughts I'd turn,
A fav'rite care should *horticulture* be,
But most of all would *geoponicks* please.
While *ambulation* thoughtless I protract,
The tir'd sun *appropinquates* to the sea:
And now my *arid* throat, and *latrant* guts
Vociferate for supper; but what house
To get it in gives *dubitation* sad.
O! for a *turgid* bottle of Bell's beer,
Mature for *imbibition*! and O! for
(Dear object of *hiation*) mutton pies.

EPIGRAM

ON JAMES BOSWELL, ESQ. AND DR. SAMUEL JOHNSON BEING CONFINED TO THE ISLE OF SKY.

["Dr. Johnson and Mr. Boswell have at last appeared. It seems they sailed from the isle of Sky on the 3d instant, bound for Icolmkill, but were driven, by the remarkable storm which came on that day, to the isle of Coll, where they were wind bound for a fortnight. On *getting loose* from Coll, as they term it, they reached the isle of Mull, and from thence went to Icolmkill, under the conduct of Sir Allan Maclean. They dined yesterday with the Duke of Argyle, and this day set out for Glasgow, from whence they are to go to Auchinleck.

"Dr. Johnson being asked, how he liked his entertainment in the Highlands? answered, 'That the sauce to everything was the benevolence of the inhabitants, which, he said, could not be enough praised. I love the people, said he, better than the country.'—Dr. Johnson and Mr. Boswell are expected next week at lord Elibank's in East-Lothian."—*Extract of a letter from Inverary, Oct.* 26, 1773.]

Two gems, the nation's greatest boast,
To Scotia's plains drew near,
Bright to illume her dismal coast,
And barren fields to cheer.

She, fearing that their gracious forms,
To other climes would fly,
Learning and Liberty by storms
Confin'd to Isle of Sky.

EXTEMPORE BY MR. R. FERGUSSON—

ON LEITH WALK, ON HEARING SOME YOUNG LAWYERS PROPOSE TO PAY A VISIT TO THE OLD GIBBET, THEN JUST CUT DOWN.

LAWYERS! respect the fatal tree,
On which so many rogues have swung;
For, by the Law's most just decree,
Its p—f——rs are never hung.

R. FERGUSSON'S LAST WILL.

WHILE sober folks, in humble prose,
Estate, and goods, and gear dispose,
A poet surely may disperse
His moveables in doggerel verse;
And fearing death my blood will fast chill,
I hereby constitute my last will.
Then wit ye me to have made o'er
To nature my poetic lore;
To her I give and grant the freedom
Of paying to the bards who need 'em
As many talents as she gave,
When I became the Muses' slave.
Thanks to the gods, who made me poor!
No lukewarm friends molest my door,
Who always show a busy care
For being legatee or heir:
Of this stamp none will ever follow
The youth that's favour'd by Apollo.
But to those few who know my case,
Nor thought a poet's friend disgrace,

The following trifles I bequeath,
And leave them with my kindest breath;
Nor will I burden them with payment
Of debts incurr'd, or coffin raiment,
As yet 'twas never my intent
To pass an Irish compliment.

To Jamie Rae,[1] who oft jocosus,
With me partook of cheering doses,
I leave my snuff-box, to regale
His senses after drowsy meal,
And wake remembrance of a friend
Who lov'd him to his latter end:
But if this pledge should make him sorry,
And argue like *memento mori*,
He may bequeath't 'mong stubborn fellows,
To all the finer feelings callous,
Who think that parting breath's a sneeze
To set sensations all at ease.

To Oliphant,[2] my friend, I legate
Those scrolls poetic which he may get,
With ample freedom to correct
Those writs I ne'er could retrospect,
With power to him and his succession
To print and sell a new impression:
And here I fix on Ossian's head
A domicile for Doric reed,
With as much power *ad Musæ bona*
As I in *propria persona*.

To Hamilton,[1] I give the task
Outstanding debts to crave and ask;
And that my muse he may not dub ill,
For loading him with so much trouble,

1 Solicitor at Law, and the poet's intimate friend.—*F.*
2 Late bookseller in Edinburgh.—*F.*

My debts I leave him *singulatim*,
As they are mostly *desperatim*.
To Woods,[1] whose genius can provoke
His passions to the bowl or sock,
For love to thee, and to the nine,
Be my immortal Shakspeare thine:
Here may you through the alleys turn,
Where Falstaff laughs, where heroes mourn,
And boldly catch the glowing fire
That dwells in raptures on his lyre.
Now at my dirge (if dirge there be!)
Due to the Muse and poetry,
Let Hutchison[2] attend, for none is
More fit to guide the ceremonies;
As I in health with him would often
This clay-built mansion wash and soften,
So let my friends with him partake
The gen'rous wine at dirge or wake.
And I consent to registration
Of this my will for preservation,
That patent it may be, and seen
In Walter's Weekly Magazine.
Witness whereof, these presents wrote are
By William Blair, the public notar,
And for the tremor of my hand,
Are sign'd by him at my command.

R. F. + *his mark.*

1 Woods was long an esteemed actor in Edinburgh, and was himself possessed of poetical talent. He knew Burns well, and that generous Poet composed an address for him for his 'Benefit Night' in 1787, which was delivered with applause. He died in Edinburgh, Dec. 14th, 1802.

2 A tavern keeper.—*F.*

CODICIL TO R. FERGUSSON'S LAST WILL.

WHEREAS, by test'ment, dated blank,
Inroll'd in the poetic rank,
'Midst brighter themes that weekly come
To make parade at Walter's drum,
I there, for certain weighty causes,
Produced some kind bequeathing clauses,
And left to friends (as 'tis the custom
With nothing till our death to trust 'em),
Some tokens of a pure regard
From one who lived and died a Bard.
If poverty has any crime in
Teaching mankind the art of rhyming,
Then by these presents, know all mortals,
Who come within the Muses' portals,
That I approve my will aforesaid,
But think that something might be more said,
And only now would humbly seek
The liberty to add and eik
To test'ment which already made is,
And duly register'd, as said is.
To Tulloch,[1] who, in kind compassion,
Departed from the common fashion,
And gave to me, who never paid it,
Two flasks of port upon my credit,
I leave the flasks as full of air
As his of ruddy moisture were;

1 A wine merchant.—*F.* The venerable Miss Ruddiman remembered this circumstance distinctly. Fergusson and Tulloch met in Mr. Ruddiman's house immediately after the appearance of the poem, when Tulloch was humorously rallied by the poet and those present. See Life prefixed.

Nor let him to complain begin,
He'll get no more of cat than skin.
To Walter Ruddiman,[1] whose pen
Still screen'd me from the Dunce's den,
I leave of phiz a picture, saving
To him the freedom of engraving
Therefrom a copy, to embellish,
And give his work a smarter relish;
For prints and frontispieces bind do
Our eyes to stationary window,
As superfluities in clothes
Set off and signalize the beaux;
Not that I think in readers' eyes
My visage will be deem'd a prize;
But works that others would out-rival,
At glaring copperplates connive all;
And prints do well with him that led is
To shun the substance, hunt the shadows;
For if a picture, 'tis enough,
A Newton or a Jamie Duff.[2]
Nor would I recommend to Walter,
This scheme of copperplates to alter,

1 The publisher of the Magazine.

2 A fool who attends funerals.—*F.* Poor 'Jamie,' it will be remembered, attends the funeral of Mrs. Bertram with 'paper cravat and weepers' in Guy Mannering, [CXXXVII]. Kay has preserved his strange 'phiz' in one or two pictures: and in Patterson's painstaking letter-press to his Portraits published by Paton, there is affluence of biography, anecdote, &c. &c. concerning him. He died 1788. The stanza of Turnbull in his 'Poetical Essays' has escaped notice: and may here be introduced:—It is from his clever poem of the 'Sale of Stationary Ware.'

'But what's of a' the rarest show,
My Pictures, rang'd in seemly row;
Here twelve guid rules, which we should know;
There Captain Bluff;
Here Peeping Tom; and down below
Stands Jamie Duff.'

1 Vol. 8vo, 1788. p. 183.

Since others at the samen prices
Propose to give a dish that nice is,
Folks will desert his ordinary
Unless, like theirs, his dishes vary.
To Williamson [1] and his resetters,
Dispersing of the burial letters,
That they may pass with little cost
Fleet on the wings of penny-post;
Always providing and declaring,
That Peter shall be ever sparing
To make, as use is, the demand
For letters that may come to hand,
To me address'd while *locum tenens*
Of earth and of corporeal penance;
Where, if he fail, it is my will,
His legacy is void and null.
Let honest Greenlaw [2] be the staff
On which I lean for Epitaph.

1 The penny post-master.—*F.* See Note 1, p. 3. Nor is this the only poetic compliment that 'Indian Peter' received. The renowned Claudero, alias James Wilson, dedicated his Miscellanies in Prose and Verse, published in 1766, to 'Peter.'

2 An excellent classical scholar.—*F.* The following notice of Greenlaw appeared in the "Edinburgh Magazine and Review" a few weeks after his death:—

"Died at Edinburgh, Mr. William Greenlaw, preacher of the gospel, in the sixty-third year of his age. Though he followed not the profession to which he was bred, he was deeply skilled in theology: the few discourses he composed, discovered an abundance of matter that would have sparkled through entire volumes of modern sermons. His views also in astronomy and all the branches of mathematics were profound and uncommon, but he meant chiefly to distinguish himself by his knowledge of the learned languages: the study of them was the great object of his life, and the progress he made in them was proportioned to his acuteness and assiduity. He taught them privately in Edinburgh, above twenty years; and there was so little jealousy in his nature, that he freely bestowed his knowledge on those teachers who wished to profit by his communications. What peculiarly distinguished him was a flow of inoffensive humour: a gift rarely possessed [?] by the natives of Scotland. His heart was warm and open, his social spirit unbounded. Of money he professed a contempt, and he refused a living, which his

And that the Muses at my end
May know I had a learned friend,
Whate'er of character he's seen
In me through humour or chagrin,
I crave his genius may narrate in
The strength of Ciceronian Latin.
Reserving to myself the pow'r
To alter this at latest hour,
Cum privilegio revocare,
Without assigning *ratio quare:*
And I (as in the will before did)
Consent this deed shall be recorded
In testimonium cujus rei,
These presents are deliver'd by

R. FERGUSSON.

friends would have pressed upon him. With an ambition to excel, he was yet careless of his reputation; conscious of his own merit, he allowed men to judge of him as they pleased. His manners were simple, his figure ungainly. In a licentious age he made a vow of chastity, and what is more surprising, he kept it. The last years of his life were rather unfortunate; the constant use he made of his faculties seems to have impaired them. But he had not the misery to survive their extinction; death came to him when his friends wished for it." He appears not to have discharged the friendly duty bequeathed to him by his friend. Curiously enough his own funeral letters at his own dying request, were written in Latin, anent which a ludicrous anecdote with reference to Baillie Lothian, one of the invited, is recorded in Kay, vol. I. Part. I. p. 44.

John Cunningham,
Poet & Player

A. Fullarton & Cº. London & Edinburgh.

TO THE MEMORY OF JOHN CUNNINGHAM.[1]

Sing his praises, that doth keep
Our flocks from harm,
Pan, the father of our sheep:
And arm in arm
Tread we softly in a round,
While the hollow neighb'ring ground
Fills the music with her sound.

BEAUMONT AND FLETCHER.

YE mournful meanders and groves,
Delight of the muse and her song;
Ye grottos and dripping alcoves,
No strangers to Corydon's tongue;

Let each Sylvan and Dryad declare
His themes and his music how dear,
Their plaints and their dirges prepare,
Attendant on Corydon's bier.

The Echo that join'd in the lay,
So amorous, sprightly, and free,
Shall send forth the sounds of dismay,
And sigh with sad pity for thee.

Wild wander his flocks with the breeze;
His reed can no longer control;
His numbers no longer can please,
Or send kind relief to the soul.

But long may they wander and bleat,
To hills tell the tale of their woe;

1 Born in Dublin 1729. Died in Newcastle 18th September, 1773. His pastorals and a few of his songs, especially 'May-eve or Kate of Aberdeen,' are pleasing and chaste. His Poems have passed through a great variety of editions. The best is by Thomas Park, from the Chiswick press.

The woodlands the tale shall repeat,
And the waters shall mournfully flow.

For these were the naunts of his love,
The sacred retreats of his ease,
Where favourite Fancy would rove,
As wanton, as light as the breeze

Her zone will discolour'd appear,
With fanciful ringlets unbound,
A face pale and languid she'll wear,
A heart fraught with sorrow profound.

The reed of each shepherd will mourn,
The shades of Parnassus decay;
The Muses will dry their sad urn,
Since 'reft of young Corydon's lay.

To him every passion was known
That throbb'd in the breast with desire;
Each gentle affection was shown
In the soft sighing songs of his lyre.

Like the carolling thrush on the spray
In music soft warbling and wild,
To love was devoted each lay,
In accents pathetic and mild.

Let Beauty and Virtue revere,
And the songs of the shepherd approve,
Who felt, who lamented the snare,
When repining at pitiless love.

The summer but languidly gleams,
Pomona no comfort can bring,

Nor valleys, nor grottos, nor streams,
Nor the May-born flowerets of spring.

They have fled all with Corydon's muse,
For his brows to form chaplets of woe,
Whose reed oft awaken'd their boughs
As the whispering breezes that blow.

To many a fanciful spring
His lyre was melodiously strung;
While fairies and fauns in a ring
Have applauded the swain as he sung.

To the cheerful he usher'd his smiles,
To the woful his sigh and his tear;
A condoler with want and her toils,
When the voice of oppression was near.

Though titles and wealth were his due,
Though Fortune denied the reward;
Yet truth and sincerity knew
What the goddess would never regard.

Avails aught the generous heart,
Which Nature to goodness design'd,
If Fortune denies to impart
Her kindly relief to the mind?

'Twas but faint the relief to dismay,
The cells of the wretched among;
Though sympathy sung in the lay,
Though melody fell from his tongue.

Let the favour'd of fortune attend
To the ails of the wretched and poor:

Though Corydon's lays could befriend,
'Tis riches alone that can cure.

But they to compassion are dumb,
To pity their voices unknown;
Near sorrow they never can come,
'Till misfortune has mark'd them her own.

Now the shades of the evening depend;
Each warbler is lull'd on the spray;
The cypress doth ruefully bend
Where the corpse of cold Corydon stay.

Adieu then the songs of the swain,
Let Peace still attend on his shade;
And his pipe that is dumb to his strain,
In the grave be with Corydon laid.[1]

1 The following notice of this poem appeared in the Weekly Magazine. "Our author laments in very pathetic strains, the death of Mr. Cunningham, so well known to the lovers of polite learning by his pastoral poems. However much he may be esteemed as an author, yet more so was he admired as a man. Though possessed of a narrow fortune, his charity was general and extensive. His heart was always open to the needy and the indigent. But, bountiful to excess, a tear or sigh was often all he could bestow on lonely wanderers suing for relief.

This poem is wrote in Mr. Cunningham's manner; and we must own our author has succeeded in the imitation. A simplicity and pleasing tenderness runs through the whole piece; and the poet leads us so pleasantly through the wilds of fancy, that we are sorry when we finish our excursions with him to these happy regions.

Mr. Fergusson is already well known in the Poetical Department. His pieces wrote in the Scots language are perhaps equal to any of the kind this country has produced; and it is with no small surprise we see him, who has almost dedicated his talents to *humour* alone, shine so conspicuously in the *tender elegiac*."

JOB, CHAP III., PARAPHRASED.

Perish the fatal day when I was born,
The night with dreary darkness be forlorn;
The loathed, hateful, and lamented night
When Job, 'twas told, had first perceiv'd the light;
Let it be dark, nor let the God on high
Regard it with the favour of his eye;
Let blackest darkness and death's awful shade
Stain it, and make the trembling earth afraid;
Be it not join'd unto the varying year,
Nor to the fleeting months in swift career.
Lo! let the night in solitude's dismay
Be dumb to joy, and waste in gloom away;
On it may twilight stars be never known;
Light let it wish for, Lord! but give it none;
Curse it, let them who curse the passing day,
And to the voice of mourning raise the lay;
Nor ever be the face of dawning seen
To ope its lustre on th' enamell'd green;
Because it seal'd not up my mother's womb,
Nor hid from me the sorrows doom'd to come.
Why have I not from mother's womb expir'd?
My life resign'd when life was first requir'd?
Why did supporting knees prevent my death,
Or suckling breasts sustain my infant breath?
For now my soul with quiet had been blest,
With kings and counsellors of earth at rest,
Who bade the house of desolation rise,
And awful ruin strike tyrannic eyes,
Or with the princes unto whom were told
Rich store of silver and corrupting gold;

Or, as untimely birth, I had not been,
Like infant who the light hath never seen;
For there the wicked from their trouble cease,
And there the weary find their lasting peace;
There the poor prisoners together rest,
Nor by the hand of injury opprest;
The small and great together mingled are,
And free the servant from his master there;
Say, wherefore has an over-bounteous heaven
Light to the comfortless and wretched given?
Why should the troubled and oppress'd in soul
Fret over restless life's unsettled bowl,
Who long for death, who lists not to their pray'r,
And dig as for the treasures hid afar;
Who with excess of joy are blest and glad,
Rejoic'd when in the tomb of silence laid?
Why then is grateful light bestowed on man,
Whose life is darkness, all his days a span?
For ere the morn return'd my sighing came,
My mourning pour'd out as the mountain stream;
Wild visaged fear, with sorrow-mingled eye,
And wan destruction piteous stared me nigh;
For though nor rest nor safety blest my soul,
New trouble came, new darkness, new control.

ODE TO HORROR.

O Thou who with incessant gloom
Court'st the recess of midnight tomb!
Admit me of thy mournful throng,
The scatter'd woods and wilds among;
If e'er thy discontented ear
The voice of sympathy can cheer,

My melancholy bosom's sigh
Shall to your mournful plaint reply;
There to the fear foreboding owl
The angry Furies hiss and howl;
Or near the mountain's pendent brow
Where rush-clad streams in cadent murmurs flow.

Epode. Who's he that with imploring eye
Salutes the rosy dawning sky?
The cock proclaims the morn in vain,
His sp'rit to drive to its domain;
For morning light can but return
To bid the wretched wail and mourn:
Not the bright dawning's purple eye
Can cause the frightful vapours fly,
Nor sultry Sol's meridian throne
Can bid surrounding fears begone;
The gloom of night will still preside.
While angry conscience stares on either side.

Strophe. To ease his sore distemper'd head,
Sometimes upon the rocky bed
Reclined he lies, to list the sound
Of whispering reed in vale profound.
Happy if Morpheus visits there
A while to lull his woe and care;
Send sweeter fancies to his aid,
And teach him to be undismay'd;
Yet wretched still, for when no more
The gods their opiate balsam pour,
Ah, me! he starts, and views again
The Libyan monster prance along the plain.

Now from the oozing caves he flies,
And to the city's tumults hies,
Thinking to frolic life away,
Be ever cheerful, ever gay:

But though enwrapt in noise and smoke,
They ne'er can heal his peace when broke;
His fears arise, he sighs again
For solitude on rural plain;
Even there his wishes all convene
To bear him to his noise again.
Thus tortur'd, rack'd, and sore opprest,
He constant hunts, but never finds his rest.

Antistrophe. Oh exercise! thou healing power,
The toiling rustic's chiefest dower;
Be thou with parent virtue join'd
To quell the tumults of the mind;
Then man as much of joy can share
From ruffian winter, bleakly bare,
As from the pure ethereal blaze
That wantons in the summer rays;
The humble cottage then can bring
Content; the comfort of a king;
And gloomy mortals wish no more
For wealth and idleness to make them poor.

ODE TO DISAPPOINTMENT.

Thou joyless fiend, life's constant foe,
Sad source of care and spring of woe,
Soft pleasure's hard control;
Her gayest haunts for ever nigh;
Stern mistress of the secret sigh,
That swells the murm'ring soul.

Why haunt'st thou me through deserts drear?
With grief-swoln sounds why wound my ear,
Denied to pity's aid?

Thy visage wan did e'er I woo,
Or at thy feet in homage bow,
Or court thy sullen shade.

Even now enchanted scenes abound,
Elysian glories strew the ground,
To lure th' astonish'd eyes;
Now horrors, hell, and furies reign,
And desolate the fairy scene
Of all its gay disguise.

The passions, at thy urgent call,
Our reasons and our sense enthrall
In frenzy's fetters strong.
And now despair with lurid eye
Doth meagre poverty descry,
Subdu'd by famine long.

The lover flies the haunts of day,
In gloomy woods and wilds to stray,
There shuns his Jessy's scorn:
Sad sisters of the sighing grove
Attune their lyres to hapless love,
Dejected and forlorn.

Yet hope undaunted wears thy chain,
And smiles amidst the growing pain,
Nor fears thy sad dismay;
Unaw'd by power her fancy flies
From earth's dim orb to purer skies,
Realms of endless day.

DIRGE.

The waving yew or cypress wreath
In vain bequeath the mighty tear;
In vain the awful pomp of death
Attends the sable-shrouded bier.

Since Strephon's virtue's sunk to rest,
Nor pity's sigh, nor sorrow's strain,
Nor magic tongue, have e'er confest
Our wounded bosom's secret pain.

The just, the good, more honours share
In what the conscious breast bestows,
Than vice adorn'd with sculptor's care,
In all the venal pomp of woes.

A sad-eyed mourner at his tomb,
Thou, Friendship! pay thy rites divine,
And echo through the midnight gloom
That Strephon's early fall was thine.

THE AUTHOR'S LIFE.

My life is like the flowing stream
That glides where summer's beauties teem,
Meets all the riches of the gale
That on its watery bosom sail,
And wanders 'midst Elysian groves
Through all the haunts that fancy loves.
May I, when drooping days decline,
And 'gainst those genial streams combine,
The winter's sad decay forsake,
And centre in my parent lake.

SONG.

Since brightest beauty soon must fade,
That in life's spring so long has roll'd,
And wither in the drooping shade,
Ere it return to native mould;

Ye virgins, seize the fleeting hour,
In time catch Cytherea's joy,
Ere age your wonted smiles deflower,
And hopes of love and life annoy.

ON THE AUTHOR'S INTENTION OF GOING TO SEA.

Fortune and Bob, e'er since his birth,
Could never yet agree,
She fairly kick'd him from the earth
To try his fate at sea.

ON SEEING A COLLECTION OF PICTURES,

PAINTED BY MR. [ALEXANDER] RUNCIMAN.

[Runciman's 'Hall of Ossian' at Penicuik House is referred to in the following Verses. His 'paintings' are well known: and many of them have been engraved. There is a portrait of him in Stark's 'Biographia Scotica,' 1805. He died suddenly in 1785.]

O could my Muse, like thee, with magic skill,
Subdue the various passions at her will,
Like thee make each idea stand confest,
That honours or depraves the human breast;

Like thee could make the awe-struck world admire
An Ossian's fancy, and a Fingal's fire,
Boldly aspiring at exalted lays,
The Poet then should sing the Painter's praise.

ON NIGHT.

Now murky shades surround the pole;
Darkness lords without control:
To the notes of buzzing owl,
Lions roar and tigers howl,
Fright'ning from their azure shrine
Stars that wont in orbs to shine:
Now the sailor's storm-toss'd bark
Knows no blest celestial mark,
While in the briny troubled deep
Dolphins change their sport for sleep;
Ghosts and frightful spectres gaunt,
Churchyard's dreary footpaths haunt,
And brush with wither'd arms the dews
That fall upon the drooping yews.

EPIGRAM,

WRITTEN EXTEMPORE, AT THE DESIRE OF A GENTLEMAN WHO WAS RATHER ILL-FAVOURED, BUT WHO HAD A FAMILY OF BEAUTIFUL CHILDREN.

Scott and his children emblems are
Of real good and evil;
His children are like cherubims,
But Scott is like the devil.

GLOSSARY.

THE *ch* and *gh* have always the guttural sound. The sound of the English diphthong *oo*, is commonly spelled *ou*. The French *u*, a sound which often occurs in the Scottish language, is marked *oo* or *ui*. The *a* in genuine Scottish words, except when forming a diphthong, or followed by an *e* mute after a single consonant, sounds generally like the broad English *a* in *wall*. The Scottish diphthong *ae*, always, and *ea* very often, sound like the French *e* acute. The Scottish diphthong *ey* sounds like the Latin *ei*.

A

A', all.
Abeech, at a shy distance.
Abideint, abiding, tolerating it.
Abien, above, Perthshire dialect.
Ablins, perhaps.
Aboon, above.
Ado [*what's*], what's about?
Ae, one.
Aff, off.
Aff-hand, off-hand, without premeditation.
Aft, oft.
Aften, often.
Afterhend, afterwards.
Aftimes, oftentimes.
Agains, against.
Ahint, behind.
Aik, oak, to feel sore.
Ails, or ailings, ills.
Ain, own.
Air, early.
Airths, ways.
Aits, oats.
Aiten-straw, oaten-straw, corn-stalk.
Aith, oath.
Aix, axe.
Alake, alas!
Alane, alone.
Alang, along.
Alshin, a shoemaker's awl.
Amang, among.
Amry, cupboard.
An, if.
An', and.
Ance, once.
Anes, once, at one time.
Anither, another.
Antrin, different, strange.
Apen, open.
Aquafont, water.
Aquavitæ, whisky.
Attour [*by and*], over and above.
Auld, old.
Auld farrant, wise.
Auld lang-syne, early days.
Auld maid, spinster.
Auld Nick, the Devil.
Auld warld, ancient.
Ava, at all.
Ayont, beyond.

B

Ba, ball.
Backgaun, going back.
Badrins, *baudrins*, cat.
Bagnet, bayonet.
Bail [*leg*], running off.
Bailies, magistrates.
Bains, above.
Bairnies, little children.
Bairnly, child-like.
Bairns, children.
Baith, both.
Bakes, baked country bread, &c.
Bald, bold.
Bann, swear, curse.
Bannin, swearing.
Bane, bone.
Bannet, bonnet.
Bang'd, crammed, defeated.
Bantrin, bantering.
Bardies, poets.
Barken't, encrusted.
Barley-scones, kind of bread.
Barras, burghs, boroughs.
Bassie, an old horse.
Baudy, brothel.
Bauks, cross beams.
Bauld, bold.
Bauldly, boldly.
Bausie, an old horse.
Bauthrin, bothering.
Bawbee, half-penny.
Baxter, baker.
Be, alone.
Beasties, animals.
Beath, both.
Bedding-strae, straw for animals to lie upon.
Bedeen, immediately, in haste.
Bedown, down.
Bed-stock, part of a bed, the post.
Beek, warm.
Beenge, *beeng*, cringe.
Beenging, cringing.
Begude, began.
Begunk, trick.
Behad, behold.
Beild, shelter, defence.
Beirdly, strong.
Bęn, *ben-by*, into [the spence or parlour.]
Bend, drink.
Bender, hard drinker.
Benmost, inmost.
Bere, barley.
Betakens, betokens.
Beted, betide.
Beuks, books.
Bicker, wooden dish.
Bield, shelter, retreat.
Bien, plentiful.
Bienly, plentifully.
Biggin, building, house.
Big, to erect.
Bill, *billy*, companion.
Binna, be not.
Bink, shelf.
Birks, birch-trees.
Birky, clever fellow.
Birle, drink, throw up.
Birn, burden.
Birr, *bir*, vigour, strength.
Birs'd, bruised.
Birsel, to scorch, heat.
Birze, bruise.
Bisket, bosom, biscuit.
Bizz, buzz.
Bizzin, buzzing.
Blades, leaves.
Blaid, leaf.
Bladit, leaved.
Blate, shy, bashful, modest.
Blawn, blown.
Blawart, a plant.
Bleer-ey'd, dim-ey'd, [with tears or rheum.]
Bleering, blearing.
Bleezing, blazing.
Blink, a smiling look, a sunny snatch.

Blinkin, looking hastily.
Blobs, globules.
Blude, *bluid*, *bleid*, blood.
Bludy, *bludey*, bloody.
Bluegown. See note 3, p. 13.
Bluff, coarsely honest.
Boden, *bodin*, provided, furnished.
Bodle, one-sixth of an English penny.
Bogles, hobgoblins.
Boo, bowed.
Borrowstoun, burgh town.
Bouck, *buik*, *buke*, *bulk*, body, person.
Bouden, *bowden*, full of.
Bougil, bugle, crow of a cock.
Bourachs, *burachs*, *burrochs*, companies, collections.
Bout, about.
Bowet, lamp-holder.
Bowie, a dish.
Bra, *braw*, fine, handsome.
Brae, a declivity, slope of a hill.
Brawest, finest, handsomest.
Brawly, finely, handsomely.
Braid, broad.
Brak, broke.
Brakin, broken.
Breeks, breeches.
Brig, bridge.
Brither, brother.
Brize, bruise.
Broachie, brooch.
Broags, strong shoes.
Brock, badger.
Brodit, pricked.
Brose, a dish of oatmeal and boiled water.
Browst, what is brewed.
Browster, brewer.
Bruckie, cow.
Bruiser, pugilist.
Brulzies, broils, combats.
Brunt, burned.
Bughten-time, folding-time.
Buird, board.
Buit, but, must be.
Bumbaz'd, confused.
Bure, bore.
Burn, rivulet.
Burn-bank, the bank of a stream.
Busk, dress.
Buskit, dressed.
Buss, bush.
Butt, *but*, one division, without.
By and attour, over and above.
Bygane, *byegane*, bygone.
Bykes, nests.
Byre, cow-house.

C

Ca', call, name, drive.
Cadgie, cheerful.
Cadgily, cheerfully.
Cadie, a messenger, errand-runner.
Cairds, vagrants.
Cairn, loose heap of stones.
Callant, youth.
Caller, *cauler*, *cawler*, *caulor*, fresh, cool, sound.
Cald, cold.
Caldrife, cold-dispositioned.
Cam, came.
Cankered, ill-natured.
Canna, cannot.
Canny, happy, gentle.
Cantily, cheerfully, merrily.
Cantrip, charm, spell.
Canty, cheerful, merry.
Cap, small wooden dish.
Capernoity, bad tempered, ill-natured.
Capstane, capestone.
Carritch, catechism.
Carena, *caerna*, heed not.
Carles, old men.
Carline, old woman.
Cartes, cards.
Casion, occasion.

Cassen, cast.
Cast, lot, fate.
Castlehill, esplanade of Edinburgh Castle.
Caudron, caldron.
Cauld, cold.
Cauldness, coldness.
Cause, because.
Chancy, lucky.
Change-house, tavern.
Chap, a person, a fellow.
Chappin, less than an English quart.
Charot, chariot.
Cheek for chow, side by side.
Cheese-rack, instrument employed in making cheese.
Chiel, a familiar name for a person.
Chieps, murmur.
Chimley, chimney.
Chirm, warble.
Chirming, warbling.
Chow [*cheek for*], side by side.
Claes, clothes.
Clag, burden.
Claiking, gossiping.
Claise, *clase*, clothes.
Claith, cloth.
Clamihewit, a severe blow.
Clamp, noisy tramp.
Clark, clerk.
Clarty, dirty, unclean.
Clash, report, [lying].
Clatter, chatter.
Clattering, chattering.
Claughing, village.
Claumer, clamour.
Claver, clover.
Claw, scratch.
Cleed, clothe.
Cleeding, *cleading*, clothing.
Cleek, catch as with a hook.
Cleugh, a den between rocks.
Clitter, noise.
Close-mou's, close-mouths, alleys.
Clour, a swelling after a blow.
Clungest, slowest.
Coatie, petticoat.
Coble, a fishing boat; to repair shoes.
Cobler, a repairer of shoes.
Cock, elevate.
Cock-laird, one who cultivates all his own land.
Cockernonies, a cap, lock of hair.
Cod, pillow.
Codlin, fish.
Codroch, rustic.
Coft, bought.
Cog, *coggie*, *cogie*, wooden dish
Colley, *colly*, sheep-dog.
Comerade, companion.
Connach, abuse, tear to pieces.
Coof, foolish person.
Corbie, crow.
Corning, law-phrase.
Corp, corpse.
Cosh, comfortable.
Coshly, comfortably.
Cottar, *cotter*, person dwelling in a cot-house.
Cou'dna, could not.
Cours, crouches, shelters under.
Cout, young horse, foal.
Couter, coulter.
Couth, *couthy*, *couthie*, social.
Cow, defeat, take the pride out of.
Cowp, exchange.
Cowr, *cour*, recover.
Cox, persuade.
Cozy, snug.
Crabbit, ill-natured.
Crack, discourse, rent.
Craig, throat.
Crammin, *cramming*, filling.
Crap, crept.
Craw, crow.
Creels, baskets.

Creesh, *criesh*, grease.
Crieshy, grease, filled.
Cronies, intimate social-companions.
Crook, *croock*, twist.
Croon, hum.
Crouping, croaking.
Crouse, bold, proud.
Crously, boldly.
Crowdy, a dish made of oatmeal.
Cruizy, lamp.
Crum, crumb.
Crummie, cow.
Crune, peculiar murmur of a cow at milking time.
Cuddle, fold kindly to the bosom.
Culls, rakes.
Cunzied, monied, coined.
Cussers, coursers.
Cutty-spein, short-spoon.
Cutty-stool, low-stool, stool of repentance.
Cutty-stoup, a quartern measure.

D

Dad, a large piece.
Daff, *daffin*, fun, diversion.
Daft, merry.
Dainty, *dainties*, *daintiths*, good quantity, fine things.
Dander, wander.
Dang, pushed, knocked down.
Dantan, to deject.
Darena, dare not.
Dash, show, defiance.
Daub, a proficient.
Daut, pet.
Dead-deal, board for stretching corpses upon.
Deidly, deadly.
Deave, deafen.
Dee, die.
Deed, indeed.
Deil, Devil.
Delve, dig.
Devall, give over, cease.
Diddle, trifle.
Die, dye, colour.
Dight, clean.
Dighting, separation of corn from the chaff.
Dike, *dyke*, wall.
Ding, to worst, to push.
Dinlin, shaking.
Dinna, do not.
Dinsome, noisy.
Dirk, pierce.
Dis, does.
Disna, does not.
Divall, cease.
Divets, turf cut into broad pieces.
Dockans, herbs, the dock.
Doggie, dimin. of dog.
Doil'd, tired, exhausted.
Dominie, teacher, schoolmaster.
Donnart, unheeding, carelessly stupid.
Dool, *doolfu'*, *dools*, sorrow, painful, pains.
Dorty, proud, conceited.
Dosin, dozing, asleep.
Dossied, flung down in a peculiar whirling.
Doughtna, durst not.
Doughty, valiant.
Doup, back-side.
Dour, *dowr*, sullen.
Dow, *dow'd*, able, I was able.
Dowf, *douf*, dull.
Dowy, *dowie*, gloomy.
Dragled, drenched.
Drap, drop.
Drappit, dropped.
Draunt, drivel.
Dree, endure, suffer.
Dreech, slow, tedious.
Dreep, drop.
Dreeping, dripping.
Dribbs, *dribbles*, drops, small quantities.

Dringing, whining.
Driven, drifted.
Drog, drug.
Droukit, wet, drenched.
Drouth, thirst, drought.
Drouthy, thirsty.
Drumly, *drumbly*, muddy, stupidly.
Dubbs, pools.
Duddy, ragged, patched.
Duds, rags.
Dule, vexation, sorrow.
Dung, worsted, pushed.
Dunk, moist.
Dunt, stroke.
Dwine, to droop.
Dwyning, *dwining*, decaying, drooping.

E

Ear', early.
E'en, eyes.
Eening, *eining*, *e'ening*, *e'enin*, evening.
Efftsoons, oftentimes.
Eident, *eidant*, diligent.
Eikit, joined.
Eil, eel.
Eild, old age.
Einow, just now.
Eiry, dull, melancholy, woful.
Eisning, shrinking from dryness.
Eistack, hot-house plants, chosen bits.
Eith, easy.
Eithly, easily.
Eldins, fuel.
Emmack, an ant.
Eneugh, enough.
Engyne, mind, wisdom.
Ept, name.

F

Fa', *fa'an*. See note 2, p. 26.
Fadge, a kind of bread, a piece of it.
Fae, enemy, foe.
Fairly, perfectly.
Fairin, *fairing*, present at a fair.
Fairn-year, last year.
Fairs't, fairest, fares.
Fallow, idle, fellow.
Fand, found.
Farden, farthing.
Farer, farther.
Farle, *farrel*, a cake of bread.
Farrant, wise.
Fash, trouble.
Fash'd, *faush'd*, troubled.
Fat, *fatfor*, what for.
Faught, fallowed, fight.
Fauld, *fald*, fold.
Fauts, faults.
Fawn, flatteringly coax.
Fearns, ferns.
Feat, neat.
Feck, *fek*, a quantity.
Feckless, void of strength.
Feg, *fegg*, fig.
Fells, fell, destroy, dissipate.
Fellin, felon.
Fend, protect, to live comfortably.
Fenzying, feigning.
Ferlies, wonders, mysteries.
Ferly, wonder.
Ferra, a cow missing calf.
Fidge, to shift about restlessly.
Fier, sound, healthy.
Fieth, faith! [a minced oath.]
Fifan, belonging to Fifeshire.
Fike, move about restlessly, impatiently.
Findrums, fish.
Fint, *fient*, minced oath, not a particle.
Fitstaps, footsteps.
Fitt, foot.
Fizz, whiz.
Flae, flea.
Flaff, to move up and down like the wings of birds.
Flee, fly.

Fleein, flying.
Fleetch, coax, flatter.
Fleetchin, *fleetching*, *fletching*, flattering, beseeching.
Flea'd, flayed.
Fleg, fear.
Flegna, fear not.
Fley, to fright.
Fley'd, affrighted.
Flingin, flinging.
Flit, change, fly.
Flouk, fish, flounder.
Flowrie, *flow'r-pats*, flowery, flower-pots.
Flung, baffled, deceived.
Flunky, a better kind of servant.
Flyte, scold.
Flyteing, scolding.
Fock, people.
Forat, forward.
Fore, forward.
Fore-foughten, weary, out of breath.
Forgather, *forgether*, to meet.
Forseeth, forsooth.
Forspak, forspake.
For't, for it.
Fortes, musical term.
Fou, *fu'*, full, drunk.
Fouishenless, want of vigour.
Fouk, or *fock*, folk.
Fousom, fulsome.
Fouth, plenty.
Fra, *frae*, from.
Fraets, superstitions.
Fraise, phrase, praise.
Freshly, soundly.
Friz, curl.
Fu', *fou*, full, drunk.
Fught, fought.
Fule, fool.
Fund, found.
Fu'ness, fulness.
Furth, out of the house, forth.

G

Ga' [*gut and*], gall.
Gablin, speaking.
Gab, *gabb*, mouth.
Gabbies, stomachs.
Gabbit, of ready utterance.
Gabblin, prating pertly.
Gae, go.
Gaed, went.
Gaists, *ghaists*, ghosts.
Gamon, feet.
Gane, gone.
Gang, go.
Ganging, going.
Gantries, stands for barrels.
Gar, cause, make.
Gardies, arms.
Gar't, *gar'd*, caused, forced.
Gash. prosperous, fair, sagacious.
Gat, got.
Gate, way, road.
Gaudsman, a ploughboy.
Gaunt, yawn.
Gaunting, yawning.
Gawn, *gaun*, going.
Gawsy, *gausy*, buxom, looking big.
Gear, *geer*, goods, riches.
Geck, slight, toss the head with disdain.
Geed, good, Perthshire dialect.
Gentle, rich, upper ranks.
Gets, children.
Geyzen'd, shrunk with dryness.
Gezz, wig.
Gezzy-makers, wig-makers.
Ghaist, a ghost.
Gie, give.
Gien, given.
Gies, gives.
Gif, if.
Gilpy, a roguish young person.
Gimmers, women, young ewes.
Gin, if.
Gingbread, gingerbread.

Gird, a ring, a stave.
Girdle, a cookery fire-dish.
Girn, twist the face discontentedly, a trap.
Girnal, a box or barrel for holding meal.
Girsle, gristle.
Git, get.
Gizard, a false-face.
Gizz, wig.
Gizzen, rent with heat, dry.
Glaikit, *glakit*, foolish, inattentive.
Glamer, deceiving spell, juggling.
Gleefu', gleeful, full of joy.
Gleesome, cheerful.
Gled, glede, kite.
Gleg, clever, ready.
Glegly, cleverly.
Glen, a dell.
Glent, peep, glint.
Gleyb, glebe.
Glib, *glibb*, *glibly*, smooth.
Glomin, shut of eve. See note, p. 59.
Glore, *glorie*, glory.
Glour, stare, look.
Glowrin, *glowring*, staring.
Glowm, gloom, frown.
Goud, *gowd*, gold.
Gouk, *gowk*, foolish person.
Gowan, daisy.
Gowany, full of daisies.
Gowdspink, goldfinch.
Gowpins, handfuls.
Graith, accoutrements.
Grane, *grain*, groan.
Grannie, grandmother.
Grassum, free gift.
Gravat, neckcloth.
Greapin, groping.
Gree, agree.
Green, *grien*, long for.
Greening, longing for.
Greet, weep.
Grinders, teeth.
Grip, catch, hold.
Grist, contents.
Grund, ground.
Gudely, goodly.
Gudeam, grandmother.
Gueed, *guid*, good.
Gulp, devour, swallow up.
Gulzie, large knife..
Guslit, gushed.
Gust, taste.
Gusted, tasted.
Gusty, tasty.
Gut, belly.
Gutcher, grandfather.

H

Ha', *ha'-house*, hall.
Habuliments, habiliments.
Hackie, cow.
Had, hold.
Hadna, had not.
Hae, have.
Haffit, cheek.
Hafflins, *haflins*, half-and-half.
Haggis, a Scottish dish.
Haiks, horses.
Haill, *hail*, whole.
Hailstanes, hailstones.
Hain'd, saved.
Hair-kaimer, hair-comber.
Hair-mould, lost, dirty.
Halland, division in a house.
Halloween, 31st of October.
Halesome, wholesome.
Haly, holy.
Hamely, homely.
Hamespun, homespun.
Hameward, homeward.
Hame-o'er, home-over.
Hameil, home-bred.
Hamlocks, hemlocks.
Hap, cover.
Hap-warms, mantles.
Harken, hearken.
Harl, drag.

Harlin, dragging.
Harst, harvest.
Haud, hold.
Haugh, low ground by the side of a river.
Haveril, a foolish silly fellow.
Hawkie, a cow.
Hawse, throat.
Hearse, hoarse.
Heart-scad, pain in the stomach, heart-burn.
Hearth-stane, hearth-stone.
Heathery, heathy.
Heeze, a lift, to elevate.
Hegh, an exclamation.
Heh, oh!
Heid, head.
Helter-skelter, hurriedly and confusedly.
Herd, to tend flocks, one who herds. See p. 154.
Hereawa, here-away.
Herried, plundered.
Herrin, herring.
Het, hot.
Het-pint, hot-pint.
Hidling, hiding, private.
Hight, height.
Hinder, last.
Hiney, honey.
Hineyed, covered with honey.
Hing, hang.
Hip, miss over.
Hirpling, creeping, [painfully, decrepitly.]
Hirsel, *hirsle*, move slowly and lamely.
Hobble, move.
Hoden-gray, coarse home-grown and home-spun cloth.
Holey, full of holes.
Hooly, slow.
Horse-couper, horse-dealer.
Houf, *houff*, resort.
Houkit, digged.
Houlsters, holsters.
Houp, hope.
Housie, little house.
Housing, furnishing.
How, hollow.
Howtowdy, a young hen.
Howt, fy.
Howdie, midwife.
Howder, confusedly thrown together.
Howlet, an owl.
Hummil, without horns.
Hund, hound.
Hunder, one hundred.
Hunder-fauld, hundred-fold.
Hunger't, hungered.
Huntit, hunted.
Hurdies, legs, the buttocks.
Hyn, go away.

I

I', in.
Ill-haind, ill-saved.
Ilka, every, each.
Imost, inmost.
Indentit, indentured.
Ingan, onion.
Ingle, fire.
Ingle-nook, fireside corner.
Ingle-side, the fireside.
Inrow'd, inrolled.
I'se, I shall.
Is't, is it?
Ither, other.
Itlane, alone.
Itsel, itself.

J

Jarrin, jarring.
Jeels, jellies.
Jibe, to mock.
Jillet, a jilt, a giddy girl.
Jink, to dodge.
Jo, *joe*, sweetheart.
Jook, *jouk*, to stoop.

Joot, sour or dead liquor.
Jouk, stoop.
Jow, swinging motion and peal of a large bell.

K

Kail, colewort, broth.
Kail-yeard, kitchen-garden.
Kain, fowls, &c., paid as rent by a farmer.
Kam'd, combed.
Kane, rent in fowls, &c., by a farmer.
Katties, young girls.
Kebbuck, *kebbock*, cheese.
Keek, look, peep.
Keeking-glasses, looking-glasses.
Ken, know.
Ken'd, *ken't*, knew.
Kendling, kindling.
Keppit, met.
Kern-supper, harvest-supper.
Kettle, fire-side dish.
Kill, a kiln.
Kiltit, tucked up.
Kin-kind, akin, related.
Kirk, church.
Kirkyard, burying ground.
Kirn, churn.
Kirnstaff, churnstaff.
Kist, chest, trunk.
Kist-nook, chest corner.
Kitchen, sauce.
Kittle, difficult, to tickle.
Kniefly, with vivacity.
Knoll, hillock.
Knout, cattle.
Know, small round hillock.
Ky, cows.
Kyte, belly.
Kyth, discover.

L

Labster, lobster.
Lad, *laddie*, *lathie*, young man.
Lade, fill.
Ladin, *laden*, lading.
Laiglen, milking pail with one handle.
Laird, proprietor, landlord.
Lair'd, sunk in snow or mud.
Laith, loath.
Lambie, lamb.
Lammer-bead, an amber bead.
Land-loupers, runners over the country.
Lanely, lonely.
Lang, long.
Langer, longer.
Langrun, end.
Langsyne, *langsine*, long ago, in early days.
Langspun, long-spun.
Lang'd, longed.
Langkail, colewort.
Langlook't, looked.
Lanthron, lantern, lean-looking.
Lapper'd, curdled.
Lassie, girl, young woman.
Lat, let, allow.
Lathie, young man.
Lave, rest.
Laverock, lark.
Lawen, reckoning.
Lea, *lea-rig*, grassy ridge.
Lealest, surest.
Leally, *leal*, loyally, honestly.
Lean, a resting-place.
Lear'd, learning, learned.
Ledy, lady.
Lee-lang, all the day.
Leem, loom.
Leesh, lash.
Leesins, lessons.
Leet. See note 1, p. 103.
Leg-bail, running away.
Leive, leave, as soon.
Lend, give.
Lerroch. See note 1, p. 62.
Let a be, let alone.

Leugh, laughed.
Licket, struck.
Licks, strokes.
Lift, the sky.
Lightlyin, despising.
Lightsome, cheerful.
Ligs, lies.
Lilt, to sing in snatches, a tune.
Lilting, singing in snatches.
Limmers, whores.
Lingans, thread used by shoemakers.
Lintie, linnet.
Lippen, trust to, rely upon.
Lith, joint.
Loe, *looe*, love.
Loo'd, loved.
Loof, hollow of the hand.
Louden, Lothian.
Lounder, severe blow.
Loup, leap.
Lout, stoop.
Loutit, stooped.
Low, flame.
Lown, a tricky fellow, a ragamuffin.
Lows'd, loosed.
Lowse, loose.
Luckie, mistress.
Lug, ear.
Luggie, wooden dish with a handle.
Lum, chimney.
Lure, rather.
Lyart, hoary, old.
Lyther, more sheltered.

M

Macaronies, dandies.
Macker, maker.
Mae, more.
Maiks, half-pence.
Mailin, farm.
Main, *mane*, *maen*, moan, complain.
Mair, *mare*, more.
Maist, most.
Maister, master.
Maister-cann, chamber-pot.
Maister laiglen, largest milking pail.
Mak, make.
Makes na, makes not, matters not.
Makin, quantity, making.
Maments, moments.
Man, must.
Mane or *maen*, moan.
Mang, among.
Marsh, march.
Marts, winter provision of beef.
Master-mous, chamber-pots.
Maught, might.
Maukin, a hare.
Maukin-mad, mad as a hare.
Maunna, must not, may not.
Mavis, a thrush.
Maw, to mow.
Meikle, much.
Meltith, a meal.
Menzie, a collection.
Mergh, except.
Met, *mett*, measure, rhyme.
Mier, muir.
Milkness, milkiness.
Mind, remember.
Mint, attempt.
Mirk, dark.
Mirkest, darkest.
Mirlygoes, dizziness by spells.
Mishanter, *mishaunter*, mishap.
Mislear'd, unmannerly, mischievous.
Mither, mother.
Mony, *monie*, many.
Morn, to-morrow morning.
Motty, spotted.
Mou, *mow*, mouth.
Muckle, big.
Musand, musing.
Mutches, caps.
Mysell, myself.

N

Na, *nae*, no, not.
Naebody, no person.
Naething, nothing.
Nag [*shanks*], on foot.
Naig, horse.
Nainsel, myself.
Nakit, naked.
Nane, none.
Near-gawn, close-fisted, miserly.
Nebb, bill, point.
Neebor, neighbour.
Needna, need not.
Ne'er-do-well, never-do-well.
Neist, next.
Nicht, night.
Nicht-cap, night-cap.
Nick [*auld*], Devil.
Nick stick, notched reckoning stick.
Nicker, neigh.
Nickit, notched, cut.
Niest, next.
No, not.
Nocht, nothing.
Noddle, head.
Noggan, a drinking-measure.
Nook, corner.
Nor', north.
Norland, from the North of Scotland.
Notar, notary public.
Nouther, neither.
Nowt, cattle.

O

O', of.
Oe'r-gang, over-go, outstrip.
Ohon, alas!
On't, on it.
Ony, any.
Orrow, *orro*, spare.
Or, before.
O't, of it.
Ouk, week.
Outby, out-side.
Out-o'er, out-over.
Outs, particulars.
Owr, *ow'r*, *owre*, *our*, *o'er*, over.
Owsen, oxen.
Oy, grandchild.

P

Packman, chapman, pedlar.
Pains, care.
Pakes, strokes.
Pandours, particular kind of oyster.
Pang'd, filled full.
Pap, pop.
Parritch, pottage, oatmeal pudding.
Partans, crabs.
Patt, *pat*, put, a pot.
Patientfu', waiting with patience.
Paughty, haughty, proud.
Pauky, sly, cunning, wisely rather than harmfully.
Pawns, sells [conditionally].
Pay, punish.
Peching, breathing hardly.
Peel, scorch.
Peerify, purify.
Pegh, pant.
Perfite, *perfyte*, perfect.
Pibrachs, Highland tunes.
Pickle, some, a few.
Pig, an earthen pitcher.
Pingle, contend.
Pint stoup, a drinking-dish.
Pirny, thread intermixed.
Pits, *pitts*, puts.
Plack, old Scotch coin.
Plainstanes, foot-path flagged.
Plaisters, plasters.
Plashes, plunges.
Playfair, plaything.
Pleugh, plough.
Pley, discord.
Pleyploys, mischievous tricks.
Plooks, *plooky*, pimples, pimply.

Pluck, eating, quantity allowed.
Pock, bag.
Pomet, hair-unguent, pomatum.
Poortith, poverty.
Pounie, *powny*, poney.
Pouther'd, powdered.
Pout, poult.
Pow, head.
Preein, tasting.
Prievin, tasting, proving.
Prie, taste.
Priggin, entreating, cheapening.
Protty, pretty.
Puddock, frog.
Pu'd, pulled.
Pund, pound.
Purpie, purple.
Pussie, cat or hare.

Q

Quat, *quatt*, quit.
Quean, dame.
Quegh, a wooden drinking-dish.
Quo, *quoth*, *quod*, said.

R

Raggit, ragged.
Raingit, ranged.
Rakin, raking.
Rangle, range, row.
Rant, brisk.
Raw, row.
Rax, reach, stretch.
Ream, cream.
Reaming, *reamin*, brimful, frothing.
Reck, heed.
Reek, smoke.
Reel, a dance, walk smartly.
Reezle, heavy stroke.
Reath. See note 2, p. 53.
Redd up, arranged.
Red-wud, in violent passion.
Reid, red.
Remeid, help.
Restin, owing, resting,
Restit, the appointed 'time' of the fire.
Rib, wife.
Rigg, *rig*, ridge.
Rig-length, length of a ridge.
Rime, rhyme.
Rin, run.
Ripe, seek and empty.
Rokelay, *rokely*, cloak, mantle.
Rookit, robbed.
Roose. praise.
Roset, *rozet*, rosin.
Roup, sale.
Rout, to make a noise.
Rowe, *row*, roll.
Rowtin, lowing.
Royit, romping, riotous.
Ruck, stack.
Rue, repent.
Rug, good bargain.
Rumple, bottom.
Runcle, wrinkle
Rung, staff.

S

Sae, so.
Saft, soft.
Saften, soften.
Sane, *sain*, bless.
Sair, sore, to serve.
Sair'd, serv'd.
Sairly, sorely.
Sall, shall.
Sang, song.
Sangster, songster.
Sappy, hearty.
Sark, shirt.
Sarkless, without a shirt.
Sattlin, settling.
Sauchen, willow.
Saugh, willow.
Saul, soul.
Saulies, hired mourners at funerals.
Saut, salt.

Sautit, salted.
Sax, six.
Saxpence, sixpence.
Scabbit, scabbed.
Scad, scorch, scald.
Scalding, *scaulding*, scolding.
Scancing, shining.
Scantlins, scarcely.
Scape, bee-hive.
Scar-crows, scare-crows.
Scart, scratch.
Scaw'd, burned, scabbed.
Sclates, slates.
Scoul, *scowl*, scold.
Scoulin, scolding.
Scoup, scope.
Scouth, plenty.
Scowder, half-burned, touched with fire.
Scowry, scouring.
Scrapt, scraped.
Scrimp, spare.
Scrimply, sparely.
Scud, run.
Scunner, loathe.
Seenil, seldom.
Seeth, sooth.
Sell, self.
Sell'd, *sell't*, sold.
Sentries, sentinels.
Sey, try.
Sey piece, trial piece.
Seything, foaming.
Shaird, fragment.
Shakewinds, shaking-winds.
Shank, leg, stocking.
Shanks nag, the feet.
She dow, dove, wife.
Shauna, *shanna*, shall not.
Shaw, show.
Shaw'n, shown.
Shelly-coat, bum-bailiff.
Shier, sure.
Shillins, shillings.
Shins, shoes, feet.
Shod, shoed.
Shoon, shoes.
Shoppies, dimin. of shops.
Shud, should.
Sib, akin.
Sic, sick, such.
Siccan, such.
Sicker, sure.
Siclike, *sicken*, such like.
Sightly, good-looking.
Siller, money, colour of silver.
Silly, weak.
Singand, singing.
Sin-syne, since then.
Skair, share.
Skair'd, shared.
Skaith, harm.
Skaithless, uninjured.
Skeegh, skittish.
Skelf, shelf.
Skelp, slap.
Skelter, confusedly in haste.
Skirl, shriek.
Sklent, slanted.
Skreed, tear, rent.
Skreen, protect.
Slae, sloe.
Slavers, saliva.
Slaw-gaun, slow-going.
Slaisters, dribbles.
Slee, sly.
Sleely, slyly.
Sleek, smooth.
Slocken, quench [thirst].
Sma', small.
Sma'est, smallest.
Smack, kiss.
Smeek, smoke.
Smore, smother.
Snaw, snow.
Snawtappit, covered with snow.
Snawba, snowball.
Snell, bitter-cold.
Snelly, sharply, bitterly.
Sniring, suppressed laughter.

Snodlit, kept in order.
Soals, soles [of shoes].
Soden, boiled.
Sonsy, engaging look.
Sook, suck.
Soom, swim.
Soud, should.
Sough, melancholy wind, sigh.
Soum, swim.
Soun, sound.
Soup, a spoonful, a small quantity.
Souple, pliant.
Sour-mou'd, ill-natured.
Souring, something sour.
Souter, shoemaker.
Sowder, solder.
Sowff, a low whistle.
Spae, to tell fortunes.
Spaewife, fortune teller.
Spairin, sparing.
Spats, spots.
Spaul, bone.
Speal, *speel*, climb.
Spear, *speer*, *speir*, ask.
Speen, spoon.
Specks, spectacles.
Speid, speed.
Speldings, fish [dried].
Spence, part of a house.
Spink, goldfinch.
Spinnel, spinnet.
Spits, floods.
Splits, wands.
Spindle shanks, small limbs.
Spunk, match tipped with brimstone.
Spraings, stripes of different colours.
Spraingit, striped.
Spreckled, spotted.
Spring, tune.
Spulzie, spoil.
Squeel, cry out loudly.
Sta', a stall.
Stackit, erected, built.
Stamack, stomach.
Stane, stone.
Stang, sting.
Stap, step.
Stappit, stopped.
Stauning, standing.
Stark, stout.
Starnies, stars.
Staw'd, satisfied to nausea.
Stay, *stey*, steep.
Steekit, shut.
Steepit, soaked.
Stend, run quickly.
Stent, an assigned quantity, to stretch or extend.
Stickit, stabbed.
Stirrah, a man.
Stile, gate.
Stoo, cut down.
Stoiter, stumble, stagger.
Stoup, a drinking-jug.
Stown, stole.
Strae, straw.
Straik, stroke.
Strakit, stroked.
Strappin, lusty, tall.
Strathspeys, dances.
Strang, strong.
Straught, straight.
Stravaig, stroll.
Strave, strove.
Streek, stretch.
Stroaks, strokes.
Streen, last night.
Stumps, legs, [feet].
Subscrive, subscribe.
Sud, should.
Sugh. See Sough.
Swack, healthy, jolly.
Swall'd, swollen.
Swaird, grass, sward.
Swank, stately, jolly.
Sweel, swallow.
Sweer, loath.
Swither, hesitate.

Swyth, haste.
Syn'd, *syn*, wash.
Syndet, washed, rinsed.
Syne [*auld lang*], early days, an endearing phrase.

T

Tack, lease.
Tackets, nails.
Tacksman, farmer.
Ta'en, taken.
Taes, toes.
Tane, taken, one.
Tap, top.
Tappit, topped.
Taukin, talking.
Tauntin, scoffing.
Teem, empty.
Teet-bo, game.
Teats, small quantities.
Tell'd, told.
Tenfald, tenfold.
Tent, observe.
Tenty, watchful.
Tete, teat.
Teugh, tough.
Teysday, Tuesday.
Thackit, *theekit* [*broom*], thatched.
Than, then.
Thegither, together,
Thereanent, there-concerning.
Thir, these.
Thirling, grinding-mill.
Thocht, thought.
Thof, although.
Thole, suffer.
Thrang, throng.
Thrave, prospered.
Thraw, to twist, to contradict.
Thrawart, bad tempered.
Thrawin, twisted.
Threed-bare, thread-bare.
Threep, *threap*, allege.
Thristles, thistles.
Thrivin, thriving, prospering.
Thuds, blows.
Tick, credit.
Tid, humour.
Tien, taken.
Tig, uncover, steal.
Tine, lose.
Tinkler, tinker.
Tint, lost.
Tir, uncover [a house].
Tither, other.
Toast, warm.
Tocher, dower.
Todling, gently moving, tottering.
Tongue - tackit, impediment to speech.
Tonguey, loquacious.
Toom, empty.
Toot, empty, drink of.
Toothfu', small quantity.
Tostit, toasted.
Tottl'd, boiled slowly.
Touk, beat.
Toutit, blowed, drink.
Towmonth, twelve months.
Touzles, bristles, erects.
Trades-fock, trades-people.
Tramping, heavy walking.
Treen, a dish.
Troke, *trock*, deal in.
Trotters, feet.
Trig [*made*], genteel.
Trigly, genteelly.
Truff, turf.
Tulzie, combat.
Turners, money [possessions].
Twa, two.
Twa-legg'd, two-legged.
Twang, shooting pain.
Twall, twelve.
Twalt, twelfth.
Tware, 'twere.
Tween, between.
Twin, deprive.
Twonty, twenty.
Ty'd, tied.

Tyne, lose.
Tythe, rent, the smallest quantity.

U

Ulie, *ully*, *ulzie*, oil.
Uncanny, awkward; mischievous.
Unco', strange.
Unfald, unfold.
Unfleggit, unaffrighted.
Unken'd, unknown.
Unyokit, unyoked.
Upbraidin, upbraiding.

V

Vacance, vacation.
Vaut, vault, salt.
Verry, *vera*, very.
Vockie, *vogie*, glad.
Vow, resolution.

W

Wa', wall.
Wa'-flowers, wall-flowers.
Wadna, would not.
Wae, woe.
Waefu', alas! woful!
Waesuck, O the pity!
Wag, use.
Wale, choice, choose out.
Wallies, gew-gaws.
Wambles, runs.
Wanchancy, unlucky.
Wanruly, unruly.
Wanwordy, *wanworih*, unworthy.
War, *ware*, were.
Wark, work.
Warl, *warld*, world.
Warldly, worldly.
Warlock, wizard.
Warse, *warst*, worse, worst.
Wat, wet.
Wather, wether [sheep].
Watsna, knows not.
Wauk, woke.
Wauken, awaken.
Wee-ane, *wee-things*, children.
Weel, well.
Weel-busked, well-dressed.
Weel-tim'd, rhymed.
Weel-fardly, cleverly, with a good grace.
Weet, moisture.
Weigh-bauk, scales.
Weil, well.
Welkin, sky.
Weir, war, wire.
Weirlike, warlike.
Weird, fate.
Wether gammond, feet.
Weym, belly, womb.
Weyr, wire, wear.
Wha, who.
Whae'er, whoever.
Whang, a slice of bread or cheese, &c.
Whan, when.
Whare, where.
Whare'er, wherever.
Wharefor, wherefore.
Wharenow, where now.
Wharewi', wherewith.
Wharewitha', wherewithal.
Whilk, which.
Whinge, peevishly complain.
Whish't, be silent.
Whitens, fish.
Whittle, knife.
Whumble, *wummil*, turn over, wheel over.
Whunstane, *whinstane*, trap-rock.
Wi', with.
Wicker, woven work.
Windocks, *winnocks*, windows.
Willawins, well-a-day!
Winna, will not.
Winsome, agreeable.
Wirrikow, a hobgoblin [sort of higher spirit].
Wizen, throat.
Woo, wool.

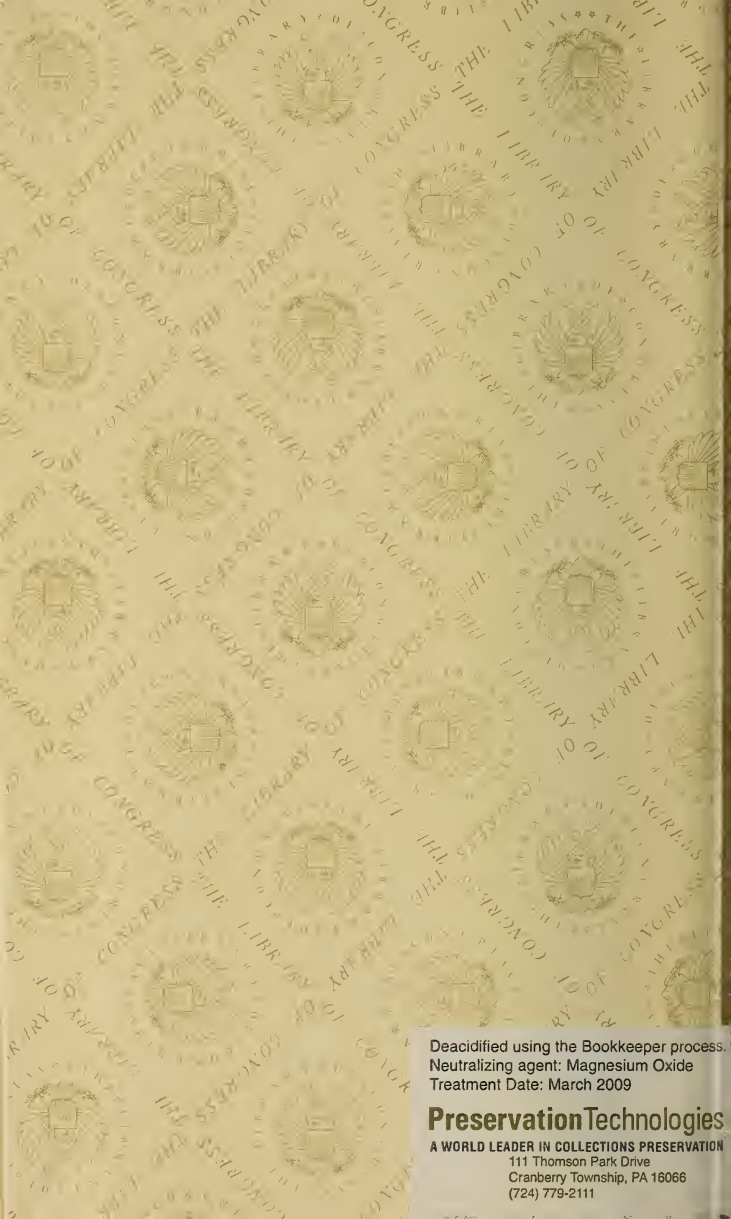
Woodies, gallows.
Wooks, weeks.
Wordies, words.
Wou'dna, would not.
Wow, exclamation!
Wraith, a spirit.
Wrang, wrong.
Wud, mad.
Wund, wind.
Wuns, winds.
Wure, wore.
Wyle, beguile, allure.
Wylie, cunning.
Wyme, belly, womb.
Wyte, blame.

Y

Yae, one.
Yallow, yellow.
Yale, ale.
Yap, hungry.
Yarker, large.
Yeard, garden, yard.
Yellowchin, screaming.
Yelp, to make a noise.
Yence, once.
Yestreen, last night.
Yird, earth,
Yird-laigh, earth-low.
Yokin, yoking, a bout.
Yokit, yoked.
Yole, fishing-boat.
Yont, beyond.
Yook, itch.
Youff'd, barked.
Younkers, young people.
Yowe, a ewe.
Yowl'd, whined piteously.
Yule, *yule-day*, Christmas.
Yule feast, Christmas feast.

741

EDINBURGH:
FULLARTON AND MACNAB, PRINTERS, LEITH WALK.



Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: March 2009

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN COLLECTIONS PRESERVATION
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 014 159 008 A